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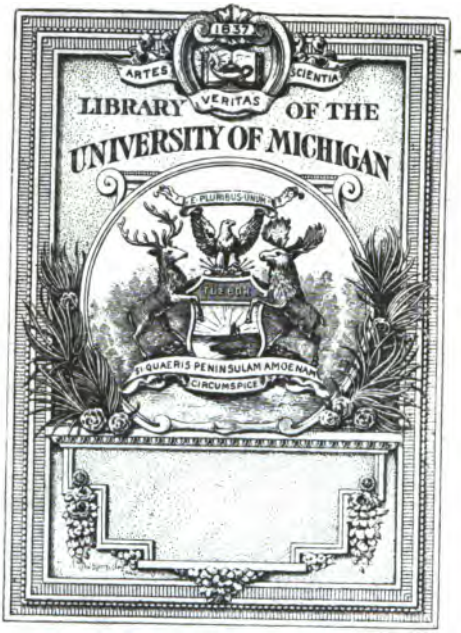
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THE WORK OF GOD IN ITALY.

From a Photograph by Simonton & Millard Dublin

Yours Sincerely
Alexander Sullivan

THE WORK OF GOD

IN

ITALY;

DETAILING THE

REVIVAL AND SPREAD OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH IN THAT KINGDOM.

BY THE

REV. W. OWEN,

AUTHOR OF "LIFE OF GENERAL SIR HENRY HAVELOCK, BART."

LONDON:

JOHN F. SHAW AND CO.,

PATERNOSTER ROW, & SOUTHAMPTON ROW.

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PREFACE.

SINCE Italy, with the unhappy exceptions of Rome and Venetia, has obtained the advantage of constitutional government, and the great blessing of religious liberty, it has become an object of deep solicitude in all parts of the Protestant world. The notices which have been given in religious publications, at public meetings, and in the daily press, concerning the circulation of the Sacred Scriptures, the meetings of Italian converts, and the preaching of the gospel to large congregations, have created a desire for a comprehensive view of the whole field now open, the work being carried forward, and the method in which the workers are conducting their operations.

Is the work of the Lord being done in Italy? Who are the workers? Where are they labouring? How may we best co-operate with them, or encourage their labours? Such are the queries now frequently heard, to which the little volume now presented is designed to furnish faithful replies. The idea of the work arose during the intercourse the Author was privileged to hold with

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Signor Gavazzi when last in England, and by whose kindness some important portion of the matter was supplied.

The reformation in Italy in the sixteenth century, briefly sketched at the opening of this volume, extended chiefly among the upper classes, was introduced and nourished by foreign agency, and had to struggle against the political and Papal despotism which allowed no intellectual freedom. It was effectually suppressed in about fifty years after it began. Still it shows how the people were at that period dissatisfied with the Romish superstition, and encourages the hope of permanence and success at a time when the good work originates among the Italian people, extends chiefly among the poor, and is fostered by free political institutions.

That is a divine hand which has secured for Italy the blessing of political liberty; for its evangelists the right of proclaiming the gospel and distributing the Sacred Scriptures; for its people the right to purchase and read them, to meet for Protestant worship, and openly to profess their belief in the doctrines condemned by the priesthood of Rome: and hence to recognize the divine operation in these things, the writer designates this record the WORK OF GOD IN ITALY.

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THE WORK OF GOD IN ITALY.

CHAPTER I.

THE REFORMATION IN ITALY AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

It is only within a few years that we have been permitted to regard Italy as a land where the Word of God could freely circulate, and the glorious gospel might be proclaimed with impunity. From the period when the Italian Reformation was effectually suppressed that lovely country has been the undisturbed domain of Antichrist, and the most sanguine believer could do no more than pray and hope for the day when the Lord would consume the Man of Sin by the spirit of His mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of His coming.

Italy, with her lovely scenes and sunny skies, her classic memories and glorious history in mediæval and modern times, her philosophers, historians, poets, sculptors, and painters, her architecture and her rich treasures of art, has a charm which no other land can claim. Alas! that such a

land should have been trodden under the heel of tyranny, political and spiritual, and that a people panting for freedom should so long have failed in all their efforts to achieve their emancipation.

It is our privilege to live in the age in which Italy has achieved her escape from political and priestly slavery. It was like life from the dead to learn, a few years since, that the Holy Scriptures had been introduced into that lovely country, and were passed from hand to hand, and read by the people with avidity and delight, in despite of all priestly opposition; and to know that by this means many were receiving a pure faith instead of the superstitions which they ridiculed and had been ready to abandon for infidelity. Ours has been the happiness also to watch the progress of the great struggle for political freedom, and to hail its marvellous success. The Pope-king has been shorn of his temporal dominions, and the most odious of tyrants have had to abandon theirs, while, with the exception of Rome and the Venetian territory, "the pleasant garden of great Italy" is relieved of the presence of its oppressors.

As men loving our fellow-men, and wishing them to enjoy their natural rights, it affords us the greatest satisfaction to see the Italians in the enjoyment of constitutional freedom, treated as men, not as slaves; no longer under the surveillance of a police empowered at any time to seize them for an imaginary offence, and cast them into the

most filthy and horrible dungeons. The inhuman inflictions suffered in Italy have saddened many a heart, drawn forth the voice of indignant reprobation from our enlightened senators, and the most faithful remonstrances from the British Government; while the people of every free country have sympathized with the sufferers in their struggles, as they now sympathize with them in their triumphs. He must be blind indeed who cannot see the hand of God in this glorious emancipation from the chains of slavery, and adamantine must be that heart by which these triumphs are not contemplated with the liveliest satisfaction and gratitude.

As Christians who pray that the kingdom of Christ may come, we regard the great political changes in Italy as a means to a higher and far more important end. A great and effectual door has been opened, and it has become the duty of the Saviour's servants to enter and perform the work which claims their efforts. It is the desire of evangelical Christians that the opportunities now afforded for faithful labour may be diligently improved, while they will regard it as a high privilege to ascertain how they may most effectually co-operate with those who are doing the work of the Lord.

The writer of the following pages has watched with the deepest interest the mighty conflict which has resulted in the triumph of freedom in Italy, and a lengthened acquaintance with the remarkable

man who must be regarded as the principal worker in the newly-opened field has led him to regard Italy as the arena of a great and mighty conflict, second to none in importance, considered in itself, and in its relations to the future prosperity of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. During his recent visit to England Signor Gavazzi awakened a great interest in his own labours and those of other Christians in Italy, and, in addition to his public statements, communicated to the writer much interesting and valuable information relating to his movements during the conflict which led to the liberation of the kingdom of Naples from its oppressors. The information thus communicated is embodied in this volume, in which also will be found such notices of the work now in progress as will acquaint the reader with the workers in Italy, and the scenes of their labour.

To impart some degree of completeness to the sketch now given, it has been thought advisable to refer to the promising state of Italy three centuries ago, when the prospects of the Reformation were as bright as in England.

Many of the Italians are now perusing with the deepest interest the late Dr. M'Crie's history of the progress and suppression of the reformation in their country in the sixteenth century.

In Italy, as in England, the corruptions of the Romish Church were the subjects of frequent attack

before the Reformation. In the middle ages the Troubadours severely lashed the vices of the ecclesiastics, and, as they traversed the country, often expressed that popular disgust which their songs served only to increase. Thus one of them complains: "There are no crimes for which pardon cannot be obtained from the monks; for money they grant to renegades and usurers that sepulture which they deny to the poor who have nothing to pay. To live at ease, to enjoy good fish, fine wheaten bread, and exquisite wines is their great object during the whole year. God grant me to be a monk, if salvation is to be purchased at such a price."

Dante, in the thirteenth century, often reiterated his protests against the errors of the Church and the crimes of its priests. He complained that—

> "They whose office is
> To preach the gospel, let the gospel sleep;
> And pass their own inventions off instead;"

through whose sinful ignorance and neglect, he adds—

> "The sheep meanwhile, poor witless ones, return
> From pasture fed with wind; and what avails
> For their excuse, they do not see their harm."

The starting-point in the Reformation in Italy is found in the times of Jeronimo Savonarola, who was born in Ferrara in 1452, thirty-one years before Luther. Much diversity of opinion exists

as to the position that should be assigned to Savonarola in connection with the Reformation in Italy, of which he has been called the Luther; while others have regarded him only as a delirious fanatic and ambitious demagogue. Nothing, however, can be better than the judicious opinion expressed by Dr. M'Crie, who says: "The best and most enlightened men of that age bear unequivocal testimony to his integrity, sanctity, and patriotism. It has been supposed, but without satisfactory proof, that he held the doctrines concerning justification, communion in both kinds, indulgences, and tradition, which were afterwards called Protestant. The reform which he sought had for its object a change in the manners, not the faith of the Christian world. He believed that the discipline of the Church was corrupt, and that those who had the charge of souls, from the highest to the lowest, had become unfaithful. To this persuasion, he joined an ardent passion for political liberty, which qualified him for being the organ of those of his countrymen who felt as Christians for the dishonours done to religion, and as citizens for the encroachments on their political rights. The appearance of such a person, at a time when the Papal throne was filled by a man of the most profligate character, and the Italian republics were on the eve of being stripped of the last remains of their freedom, claims the attention of the inquirer into the causes of the Reformation."

Savonarola, who was an eloquent and powerful preacher, more than twenty years before Luther visited Rome, and saw there corruptions against which he protested, was alarmed at the effects of his own eloquence, and prudently sought retirement and severe discipline to keep himself from undue elation. He had not Luther's clear perception of the great doctrine by which alone the errors of Rome were to be effectually resisted. He inveighed against the immoralities of the times, the vices of the clergy, and the disorders of Church and State, and ventured to say that the work of reform should begin with the Pope. As the result of his appeals to the Florentines, we are told that "luxury was repressed, the women gave an example of modesty in their dress, and a change of manners became visible over the whole city." Such reforms had their value, which was small compared with the reformation Luther was the instrument of effecting among his countrymen; but this modicum of truth was too great for the Church to tolerate, and on the 29th of May, 1498, Savonarola was led forth from St. Marks, to be publicly burnt, when, to quote his last words, he passed, "from the militant." He was burnt with two other monks, and though strict orders were given to collect their ashes and throw them into the Arno, some relics were preserved which are still shown in Florence.

The style of Savonarola's preaching, and the

objects he sought to accomplish are shown in the following specimen from one of his sermons:—

"When contrary planets come into contact with each other, bad effects are sure to ensue to the world in natural things. You will say, 'Oh! but God can bring good even out of such untoward accidents as these if He pleases, and it is not inconceivable that disunion should continue among the stars.' And you say rightly; God could do so, but there are many things which it is in his power to do, and which yet He never does. He goes upon a fixed and regular system, which his wisdom has firmly established from the first, and by which it is a settled law that the stars should preserve a mutual harmony and union before they can exercise their different influences upon our lower world. He has in the same way established a set plan of procedure in the management of his Church, by which it may continue to be regulated to the end of the world, since he has instituted in it, as in the heavens, a certain presiding and governing order of angels, who co-operate in bringing forth the elect of God within it. And, as all the stars in the firmament stand in their own places according as the divine wisdom has disposed them, so these servants of God, whom he has ordained for the good of his Church, have an appointed order which is good and profitable for the bringing forth the elect of God in his Church. Now there are various kinds of prelates or spiritual planets, and

their conflicting together is attended with as bad effects to the Church, as that of the stars would be to the material world."

During a quarter of a century after the execution of Savonarola the Italian Church became the subject of repeated attacks, and priests were frequently heard in the pulpit denouncing the vices of Antichrist, while in private houses the gospel was taught by many who had perceived its value. Learned men were rendering great assistance to the study of the sacred Scriptures by editing them in Hebrew, Chaldaic, Arabic, Greek, and Latin, as well as translating them into Italian. Meanwhile the writings of Luther, Melancthon, and Zwingle were passing into the hands of the people and the priests, and some were read with admiration by the Church dignitaries in Rome; men who in other countries had imbibed the truths of the Reformation, carried them into Italy, while Italian scholars passed into Germany and Switzerland, to increase their knowledge of those truths for which they had acquired a thirst in their own land.

The Carmelite monk of Locarno, Baltasare Fontana, may be regarded as the representative of a large number of the Italian people at this period, when he thus writes to the reformed in Switzerland: "Hail! faithful in Christ. Think, oh think of Lazarus in the gospels, and of the lowly woman of Canaan who was willing to be satisfied with the crumbs which fell from the table of the Lord. As

David came to the priest in a servile dress and unarmed, so do I fly to you for the shew-bread and the armour laid up in the sanctuary. Parched with thirst I seek the fountains of living water; sitting by the wayside I cry to Him that gives sight. With tears and sighs, we who sit here in darkness humbly entreat you who are are acquainted with the titles and authors of the books of knowledge (for to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God), to send us the writings of such elect teachers as you possess, and particularly the works of the divine Zwingle, the far-famed Luther, the acute Melancthon, the accurate Ecolampade. Do you endeavour that a city of Lombardy, enslaved by Babylon, and a stranger to the gospel of Christ, may be set free."

Great damage was done to the cause of the Pope by the presence of Charles V. in Italy, among whose troops were a considerable number of Protestants. If those men had not felt the influence of the gospel, they at least had learnt the value of deliverance from Papal tyranny, and so could give the Italians correct ideas of the character of Luther and his associates, while they encouraged them to liberate themselves from the domination of the Romish priests. So powerful were all these agencies, that before 1530 we find Pope Clement saying: "From the report made to us, we have learned, with great grief of heart, that in different parts of Italy the pestiferous heresy of Luther

prevails in a high degree, not only among secular persons, but also among ecclesiastics and the regular clergy, both medicant and non-mendicant; so that some, by their discourses and conversation, and, what is worse, by their public preaching, infect numbers with this disease, greatly scandalize faithful Christians who live under the obedience of the Roman Church, and observe its laws, and contribute to the increase of heresies, the stumbling of the weak, and the no small injury of the Catholic faith."

To FERRARA belongs the honour of affording a home to some of the first labourers for the religious reformation in Italy. In 1527, Renée, the daughter of Louis XII. of France, married Hercules II., the Duke of Ferrara, and having learned the gospel at the court of Margaret, the Queen of Navarre, she soon gathered around her the friends of the reformed faith in the court over which she presided. At first her friends were received as persons eminent for their attainments in learning, among whom were several ladies. Renée was distinguished by her classic tastes, her skill as a linguist, her engaging manners, and above all by her love for the gospel; and the bright lights that shone in her court knew well how to maintain its former character for the encouragement of learning and the arts, while they gave it the new lustre of divine wisdom. Madame de Soubisse, the governess of the duchess, was surrounded by a family devoted to the cause of the Reformation. Among the ladies of this court was Olympia Morata,

justly described as the most enlightened lady of her age. This lady, whose interesting life has not until recently become accessible to French or English readers, receives the highest praise from the writers of her time. Beza speaks of the incomparable learning, which exalted her above her sex. Mechior Adam ranks her among the philosophers of Germany, as her husband belonged to that country. De Thou places her among the noblest women of antiquity for the holiness of her character; and Josias Simler, the biographer of Peter Martyr, says: "In our times, two females of equal celebrity, the one in England, and the other in Italy, have shown what the mind of their sex is capable of, when applied to rhetoric. This honour belongs to Jane Grey, and Olympia Morata." The most remarkable of the great men who here found a home, resided in the court under the assumed name of Charles Heppville, for such was the designation assumed by John Calvin, and among the eminent names of the time and place were Celio Calcagnini, Lilio Giraldi, Bartolomeo Riccio, Mazello Palingenio, and Mercantonio Flaminio. There were several faithful preachers of the gospel, who perhaps regarded Ferrara rather as the retreat in which to rest from persecution and pursue their studies, than as the scene of their active labours. Calvin, however, preached the doctrines of the Reformation to the court, and with great success.

The important help afforded by Ferrara to the cause of the Reformation is perhaps best shown in the fact that there were few among the reformed of Italy, or those suspected of holding evangelical doctrines, who had not been present at its court, and found a home under the protection of the duchess.

MODENA, which, at the period under consideration, boasted of the eminent scholars to which it had given birth, was early infected with what the Church of Rome described as "heretical pravity." Some of its enlightened citizens were correspondents of Martin Luther, and among its Academicians were many who looked with the utmost contempt on the ignorance and debasement of the Romish priesthood. The reformed doctrine even found its way into the cloisters, and the friar Della Cattellina preached the gospel, and subjected himself to the charge of heresy.

In 1540, Paoli Riccio, a Sicilian, one of the Minor conventuals, having abandoned the cowl, visited Modena, where he advocated the doctrines of the reformers. To avoid the penalties of his bold conduct, he afterwards publicly recanted the opinions he had proclaimed, but those opinions lost none of their power through the defection of the preacher. A contemporary writer, who it is not necessary to say was a Romanist, thus describes the effects of Riccio's preaching: "Persons of all classes, not only the learned but also the illiterate,

and even women, wherever they met, in the streets, in shops, or in churches, disputed about faith and the doctrine of Christ, and all promiscuously tortured the sacred Scriptures, quoting Paul, Matthew, John, the Apocalypse, and all the doctors, whose writings they never saw."

He had been cordially welcomed by the learned Academicians, whom he had encouraged to meet for the study of the Scriptures and for worship in private houses; and so rapidly had the truth spread, that it became the subject of common conversation among all classes and in the public streets.

How far the revived doctrines of the gospel had spread in Modena, we learn from the testimony of Cardinal Morone, its bishop, who, on the 21st of November, 1541, thus writes to the Duke of Ferrara: "Eight days ago I came to Modena, to make residence at my church, and to endeavour, with the divine assistance, to do all in my power, consistently with charity, to remove the bad fame which this city of your excellency has incurred, not only in Italy but abroad, in reference to the modern novelties of opinion. I had proceeded so far, and brought it to some issue, when I received an order from his Holiness to repair to Rome." The poor bishop not succeeding according to his expectations, wrote, in the May of the following year, to Cardinal Contarini: "I have found things which infinitely distress me, and while I

perceive the danger, am quite at a loss as to the means by which I can extricate myself in the affairs of this flock, which with my blood I would willingly secure to Christ, and clear from public infamy. Wherever I go, and from all quarters, I hear that the city is become Lutheran. Your suspicions are not without foundation, for it cannot be denied that much ignorance, joined with great audacity and little charity, reigns among the monks; but against the other side there are many violent suspicions, and even some proofs, which I mean to verify, with a view of adopting the remedies to which God may direct." Two months later, the same much-perplexed bishop, writing again to the cardinal, says: "Yesterday, a minister of that order frankly told me that their preachers would no longer go to Modena, on account of the persecution to which they were exposed from the Academy, it being everywhere spread abroad that the city is Lutheran."

FLORENCE received the light of the gospel in 1525, when it was cordially welcomed by many of its citizens. A distinguished place among the reformers is due to Antonio Brucioli, a native of this city, who, besides translating the sacred Scriptures from the originals, instead of the Vulgate, wrote a commentary on the whole Bible, in seven folio volumes. Having enjoyed the advantage of much intercourse with the reformed in Germany, he uttered his sentiments freely among his countrymen

in Florence, where his "heresy" excited the alarm of his friends as well as the rage of his foes. When the former warned him of the consequences that might follow from his plain speaking, he nobly replied, "If I speak truth, I cannot speak wrong;" and the latter showed their estimate of his opinions when one of them said in the pulpit, "Brucioli is fit for nothing but to be burned," alluding to the import of his name, "*twigs*," or "shavings of wood."

That the good work proceeded apace in Florence, where it was greatly promoted by the learned labours of Brucioli, is evident from the statement of the Protestants from Lucca, who found refuge in Geneva. "Though Italy be the fortress and strength of the Papal empire, because the authority of the Pope is most firmly established over the people of that country, this could not prevent the light from penetrating it in different quarters, in consequence of which scales fell from the eyes, and the fetters from the hands of many who sat in darkness and captivity. This was effected by means of our Italian translation of the Bible by Brucioli, which was published at that time, and which it was not judged prudent to stifle in its birth by those violent measures which were afterwards employed for its suppression."

To this testimony may be added the confession of a Romish friar, who exclaimed in the pulpit, "Oh, Florence! what is the meaning of *Florence?*

The flower of Italy, and thou wert so, till these Ultramontanes persuaded thee that man is justified by faith and not by works."

Bologna, although a part of the territories of the Romish Church, was not inaccessible to that evangelical truth which was now penetrating other Italian cities. The principal agent in the work of evangelization was John Mollio, who, in early life, had belonged to the order of Minorites, had devoted himself to literature and theology, and had embraced the cardinal doctrine of the reformation—justification by faith alone. Becoming a preacher and a professor in the academy, he had excellent opportunities to publish and defend the doctrines of the gospel, and when called on to maintain the truths advanced in his lectures, his defence was so able as to draw from his judges—men appointed by the Pope—the acknowledgment that "his sentiments were true, although they were such as could not be publicly taught at that time without prejudice to the apostolic see."

In these notices of the state of Protestantism in various places in Italy, it is not possible to speak with accuracy of the numbers by whom it was professed; but a fact mentioned in connection with Bologna goes to prove that they were very great. In 1545 a letter was addressed by Baldassare to a friend in Germany, stating that a nobleman in Bologna was prepared to raise six thousand soldiers

on the side of the reformers, if it should be determined to fight against the Pope.

A further evidence of the extent to which the principles of the Reformation had now spread among the Bolognese is furnished in their address to Planitz, the ambassador from the Elector of Saxony, who was understood to be sent to Charles V. with a view to induce that monarch to use his influence with the Pope to summon a council for the reformation of the church. From that address we give the following important passage, which shows an earnest purpose to throw off the galling yoke of Rome for the liberty of the gospel:—

"It is, therefore, plain to us, that, in urging the convocation of such a synod, you do not look to the advantage of the Germans, but that, in obeying the apostolic injunction, you seek the advantage and salvation of other nations. On this account all Christians profess themselves under the deepest obligations to you, and especially we of Italy, who, in proportion to our proximity to the tyrannical court (alas! we cherish the tyrant in our bosom), are bound to give thanks for the divine blessing of your liberation. We beseech and obtest you, by the faith of Christ (though you are sufficiently disposed to this already, and need not our admonitions), to employ every means in your power with the religious emperor, and to leave no stone unturned to obtain this most desirable and necessary assembly, in which you can scarcely fail to succeed,

as his gentle and gracious majesty knows that this is desired, demanded, expected, and loudly called for by the most pious, learned, and honourable men in the most illustrious cities of Italy, and even of Rome itself, many of whom, we have no doubt, will flock to you as soon as they shall learn that this is the object of your embassy."

IMOLA, in the Pontifical States, must not be passed over, lest we should lose the charming illustration it affords of the truth that out of the mouth of babes and sucklings the Lord ordains strength and perfects praise. A monk of the Observantine order, while preaching to the people at Imola, was teaching his congregation that their own good works were to be the price at which they were to merit heaven. A boy in the congregation cried out, "That's blasphemy! for the Bible tells us that Christ purchased heaven by his sufferings and death, and bestows it on us freely by his mercy." The interruption caused considerable disturbance in the congregation, and led to a dispute between the boy and the monk in the pulpit, who, with a deep sense of the indignity done to his office, exclaimed, "Get you gone, you young rascal! you are but just come from the cradle, and will you take it upon you to judge of sacred things, which the most learned cannot explain?" "Did you never read those words, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God perfecteth praise?'" rejoined the youth; upon which the preacher quitted

the pulpit in wrathful confusion, breathing out threatenings against the poor boy, who was instantly thrown into prison.

VENICE was one of the first Italian cities to receive and profit by the writings of Luther, and gave that great man the satisfaction of writing to a friend, "You give me joy by what you write of the Venetians receiving the Word of God. To Him be thanks and glory." Theodore Veit, who for some time acted as amanuensis to Luther, was a Venetian, and the medium of constant communication between the German reformer and his friends in Venice. Such was the progress of the truth in this city between 1530 and 1542, that its friends were ready to organize themselves into congregations instead of meeting, as they had, in private houses, and several members of the senate were so favourable to this measure that they hoped it would be carried.

The zeal of the reformed in Venice shows itself in a most satisfactory manner in the appeal which one of their number, Paolo Roselli, addressed to Melancthon, on the occasion of a false rumour that the mild and yielding spirit of the reformer had led him into submission to the Pope. His expostulation is worthy of a man who was himself prepared to suffer for Christ. He says: "I implore and obtest you, as the head and leader of the whole evangelical army, to regard the salvation of every individual. Though you should be called to

suffer death for the glory of Christ, fear not, I beseech you; it is better to die with honour than live in disgrace. You shall secure a glorious honour from Jesus Christ, if you defend his righteous cause; and in doing this, you may depend on the aid of the prayers and supplications of the many who, day and night, entreat Almighty God to prosper the cause of the gospel, and to preserve you and its other champions through the blood of his Son. Farewell, and desert not the cause of Christ."

Well had it been for Venice had all its people been like the writer of this faithful appeal, and declared in favour of the Reformation; for then, as it has been justly said, "it might at this day have possessed its political independence, if not also retained its ancient glory." From the city the gospel spread into many important places belonging to the republic. In Padua it was received by the professors as well as the students in the school of medicine. In Verona and Brescia there were converts to the revised doctrines, which in Bergamasco were favoured by the bishop, who sought also to impart them to his clergy. Numerous converts were made at the same time in Vicentino and Trevisano, near Venice. It is evident that, besides those who openly professed the truth, there were many secret disciples who had not courage to copy their good example, as we learn from a letter addressed to Luther, in which the writer, Altiera, solicits his influence to induce

the State of Venice to shield the persecuted from the violence of their enemies. "If God grant," says the writer, "that we obtain a truce of this kind, what accessions will be made to the kingdom of Christ in point of faith and charity! How many preachers will appear to announce Christ faithfully to the people! How many prophets, who now lurk in corners, exanimated with undue fears, will come forth to expound the Scriptures! The harvest is truly great, but there are no labourers."

MILAN had its "conventicles," and "heretics," and in consequence the bishop was directed by the Pope to make diligent search "to see that condign punishment was inflicted on the guilty, so that the pravity sown by the devil might be extirpated before it had time to shoot up and strengthen."

NAPLES is supposed to have received the reformed doctrines from the German soldiers who for some time garrisoned the city. So great were the numbers who embraced the truth, that Charles V. found it necessary to issue an edict against them, charging his viceroy in Naples to punish all who were infected with heresy, or inclined to it. A most potent enemy to Popish errors was found in Juan Valdes, a Spanish gentleman, who had learned the gospel in Germany, and was now acting as secretary to the viceroy. Without taking on him the work of the preacher, Valdes, by his conversation, imparted the knowledge of the gospel

to persons of influence, and greatly stimulated others, who knew the truth, to impart it, especially to the young whom they had to instruct. The excellent results of this course became apparent in Bernardino Ochino, and in Pietro Martire Vermigli, who, in the reign of Edward VI., became professor of divinity in Oxford. Martyr excelled in learning, and Ochino in popular eloquence; and by the divine blessing on their labours, an evangelical church was established in Naples, including persons of the first rank in the kingdom, among whom was Galeazzo Caraccioli, the eldest son of the Marquis of Vico. Antonio Caraccioli, the son of the Prince of Melphi, became Bishop of Troyes, and after an interview with Calvin and Beza at Geneva, and a meeting with the Protestants at Troyes, being convinced of the Scriptural authority of the reformed faith, became one of its preachers. At this period the gospel spread throughout the kingdom of Naples, as well as in the capital, and even into Sicily, where Beneditti, a minister of a very holy character, preached the truth to large congregations in Palermo, under the sanction of the viceroy of Charles V.

Lucca, where Peter Martyr was the prior of St. Fridiano, and where he laboured to make known the gospel, reckoned among its inhabitants a greater number of reformed Christians than any other city in Italy, and sent faithful preachers to Pisa, where, in 1543, the professors of the evan-

gelical faith formed themselves into a church, and had the Lord's Supper celebrated among them.

SIENNA had its many converts, but more important still, its Aonio Paleario, who was nominated by the senate teacher of Greek and Latin, and lecturer on philosophy and belles-lettres. How well he understood the gospel every one may now learn from his admirable book on the "Benefit of the Death of Christ," of which "many are of opinion that there is scarcely a book of this age, or at least in the Italian language, so sweet, so pious, so simple, so well fitted to instruct the ignorant and weak, especially in the doctrine of justification." This precious volume, which had nearly perished, having been recovered and reprinted, is now extensively read by the countrymen of Paleario, more than three hundred years after it was first known. This defender of the truth was threatened with martyrdom because he had written to prove that, "since He in whom the divinity resided had poured out his life's blood so lovingly for our salvation, we ought not to doubt of the good-will of heaven, but might promise ourselves the greatest tranquillity and peace." Such, however, were his faith in this truth, and his holy courage, that he replied to the threat, "If I must undergo this punishment for the foresaid testimony, then, senators, nothing more happy can befall me. In such a time as this I do not think a Christian ought to die in his bed. I am not only willing to

be accused, to be dragged to prison, to be scourged, to be hung up by the neck, to be sewed up in a sack, to be exposed to wild beasts. Let me be roasted before a fire, provided only the truth be brought to light by such a death."

To such an extent had the truth spread in MANTUA, that Pope Paul III. found it necessary to address a brief to the tolerant bishop, Gonzago, complaining of certain "illiterate clergymen and artizans, who, to the ruin of their own souls and the great scandal of others, had dared to dispute and doubt of matters belonging to the Catholic doctrine, the Articles of Belief, and the rites of the Holy Roman Church."

LOCARNO, on the Lake Maggiore, received the gospel soon after its restoration to Europe. At first there were but three who knew and professed it; but they remembered that the Midianites were not vanquished by multitudes, and that it was their duty to sow and plant, and look to the Lord for the increase. Twenty years later, Benedetto Locarno preached the gospel, with great success, to his countrymen. He was aided by Giovanni Beccaria, the "Apostle of Locarno," of whom we read that, "by reading the Scriptures without the aid of a teacher, or any human writings, he had discovered the principal errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome." Important additions were made to the number of these faithful workers, and four years later a numerous church was formed,

to which the gospel was preached, and the sacraments administered, by a pastor of the reformed faith, and to which the Lord added daily such as should be saved.

ISTRIA was the last spot in Italy on which the divine light of the gospel shone; but there the force of truth became triumphant in the conversion of a native of the place, Pierpaolo Vergerio, its bishop, and his brother, Gianbattista, Bishop of Pola, in the same district. These brothers, when they received the truth, laboured to convey throughout the dioceses the waters of salvation, and by the divine blessing on their labours, a great part of the inhabitants embraced the reformed faith before the year 1546.

CHAPTER II.

THE ITALIAN REFORMATION SUPPRESSED.

THUS were the clouds breaking over the fair fields of Italy, and the Sun of Righteousness shining on them. There was a time when it seemed as if those clouds would not return, and the remaining mists would be effectually dissipated and harmonize the moral scene with the clearness and brilliancy of external nature. Such were the hopes of many Italian Christians in the early part of the sixteenth century, and, had there been due fidelity on the part of all those who had received the divine light, the Reformation in Italy would not have been left to our times.

The place "where Satan's seat is" and was—where Antichrist sat enthroned, and the kings of the earth employed their power to sustain his assumptions—was not destined to witness, three centuries since, such a permanent triumph of the gospel as was then given to our own land. All the powers of the Romish Church were in full operation in Italy, and though many rich and honourable persons loved the gospel, there were no mighty princes to resist the haughty assump-

tions of the Pope, and spread the shield of protection over the assailants of his empire.

The unresisted might of the Pope and his hierarchy controlling the temporal authorities, and wielding those ecclesiastical powers which all "the faithful" regarded as divine, was too strong for the reformed effectually to resist. Unhappily the good work had not made sufficient progress to resist the tremendous reaction which set in as soon as the Romish power was thoroughly aroused. There were faithful soldiers of the Cross ready to do battle for the truth, but they were comparatively few against the many, and it was in the power of the Pope to kill and destroy all who could not secure their safety by flight. The persecuting Church of the Apostasy could not eradicate the faith that existed in the heart of any true believer, or prevent the fugitive from carrying the precious seed to other lands; but he who could claim the spiritual domination over Italy could effectually close the whole country against all who dared to differ from his creed. This power he had, and with what effect he employed it, we shall now briefly narrate.

In the year 1542 the Romish clergy and friars, alarmed for the safety of their craft, sent to Rome their complaints of the spread of heresy in various parts of Italy; and, as the first step towards its extermination, the Pope determined to proceed against the ecclesiastics who were known to favour the doctrines of the Reformation. Ochino, being

invited to preach to the citizens of Venice, was, by direction of the Pope, carefully watched by spies, and after discourses which greatly delighted the people, was charged by the nuncio with preaching doctrines at variance with Catholic teaching, among which justification by faith appeared to be the most offensive. He soon perceived that his enemies had resolved on his destruction, from which he sought to escape by flying to Ferrara, whence he went to Geneva. His flight led to the apprehension of some of his friends, and a severe scrutiny of the order to which he belonged, the Capuchins, some of whom escaped by flight, while others saved their lives only by apostasy.

Peter Martyr was one of the earliest objects of attack, a formal accusation against him being laid before the Papal court. At the entreaty of his friends he retired from the scene of his labours in Lucca, and found his asylum first in Zurich, then in Strasburg, and afterwards in Oxford. The monastery over which he had presided was carefully ransacked, to discover the leaven of heresy, and, in consequence, many of the monks were thrown into prison, and others retired into Switzerland. The church in Lucca continued faithful until worn out by persecution, and, twelve years after the loss of its pastor, remained stedfast in the faith, under other able teachers.

Hitherto the Inquisition had not been allowed the full development of its terrible powers in Italy,

where the Free States had resisted it so as greatly to modify its force; but now that terrible apparatus was wanted to deal with the wide-spread heresy, and Pope Paul III., in 1543, founded at Rome the Congregation of the Holy Office, giving the titles and rights of Inquisitors-General to six cardinals, who acquired the power, on both sides the Alps, to arrest and incarcerate all persons suspected of heresy. No sooner was this tremendous machinery set up than it was brought into operation with terrible effect. Its silent cells, its horrible tortures, and the dreadful arts of its officials soon did the work assigned to them. Many sought safety in exile, and others, who would not recant, were put to death. Still, there were a few who met in secret, and exhorted each other to perseverance, so that it took twenty years before the last professors of the gospel were completely rooted out of the land.

Meanwhile, the inquisitors had all the co-operation they could desire. Papal influence, brought to bear against all free inquiry, silenced, as far as its power could silence, the clever academicians in Modena, and condemned, as an impenitent heretic, Casteloetro, for the alleged crime of translating into Italian a work of Melancthon on the authority of the Church and the Fathers.

As Ferrara had proved a stronghold of the gospel, as an asylum for its distinguished professors, and centre of divine learning, where light gathered and whence it radiated, it was essential to Popery

that Ferrara should be purified from heretical pravity, and this object was accomplished after much time and labour. Spies sent into all parts of Italy, and among all classes of society, to discover heresy, were able to give to their employers the names of many excellent persons in Ferrara who loved the gospel. As the result, the mind of Duke Hercules was poisoned, and the brightest ornaments of his court were removed. The reformed church was dispersed, many of its members were thrown into prison, and one of its faithful preachers put to death.

"I learn," says Olympia Morata, "that the Christians are treated with great cruelty at Ferrara, neither high nor low are spared; some are imprisoned, others banished, and others obliged to save their lives by flight." This was not enough for the Pope, who could be satisfied only by the Duchess Renée being compelled to renounce the faith she had done so much to defend. The duke was assured that if he did not remove this last stain of heresy from his court, he would expose himself to the charge of heresy. He accordingly urged the duchess to renounce her opinions, and conform to Popery, but his appeals were useless. Her relative, Henry II. of France, proposed the services of an inquisitor, who was to preach to her, and, if necessary, employ vigorous measures to overcome her heresy, but his interference was nobly rejected by Renée, who never yielded up her faith, whatever

may have been the concessions she made to avoid separation from her children. After the death of the duke, she retired to the castle of Montargis, where she openly professed the reformed faith, and protected its preachers. But thus the last sparks of the holy fire were stamped out in Ferrara.

The influence of the Pope was effectual also in Venice, where, at his request, the doge and senators yielded the vicars every assistance to seize and punish heretics, the result of which was felt throughout all the territories of the republic. An edict was issued, requiring all who had books opposed to the Catholic faith to deliver them up within eight days, at the risk of being prosecuted as heretics; and such was the zeal of the persecutors, that we hear Altieri thus complaining: "The persecution here increases every day. Many are seized, of whom some are sent to the galleys, others condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and some, alas! have been induced, by fear of punishment, to recant. Many have been banished along with their wives and children, while still greater numbers have fled for their lives."

To the honour of Protestant truth, we find that, in despite of all this persecution, many of its professors still remained faithful, meeting in private houses when they could no longer assemble in public, so that, in 1560, they sent for a minister to form them into a church. The spies, however, were busy at their work, giving the Court of Rome information of their meetings, and securing the

arrest of all who had not time to escape. The senators at length yielded entirely to the Pope, and in 1559 earned for their body the perpetual right of electing their own patriarch. This privilege was bought at a fearful price, for Venice had to give its sons as martyrs to the Church whose power at one time it had dared to resist. So we read: "At the dead hour of midnight, the prisoner was taken from the cell, and put into a gondola, or Venetian boat, attended only, beside the sailors, by a single priest, to act as confessor. He was rowed out into the sea, beyond the two castles, where another boat was in waiting. A plank was then laid across the two gondolas, upon which the prisoner, having his body chained, and a heavy stone affixed to his feet, was placed, and on a signal given, the gondolas retiring from one another, he was precipitated into the deep."

This diabolical work found a faithful agent in the inquisitor Annibale Grisone, who had to deal with the heretics in Capo d'Istria. He read the papal bull from the pulpits, calling on the people to inform against all who were tainted with heresy, and to deliver up all the prohibited books in their possession. Such was the alarm produced by his flaming address, that the people were seized with consternation, and every one, to secure his own escape from peril, hastened to inform against his neighbour—the son against his father, and the wife against her husband. The good bishop Vergerio

was an object of special hatred. To him and the heretics he protected was ascribed the failure of the olives and the vines, and a long tirade concluded by inciting the people to rise up and stone him.

The church in Lucca, gathered and nourished by the care of Peter Martyr, was treated with dreadful severity. Its members had been tempted to boast of their courage as superior to that of other churches, and their sad failure reads an affecting lesson against all self-trust. Its principal members were seized on the same day, thrown into the dungeons of the Inquisition, where the sight of the horrible apparatus of the holy office filled them with more terror than their weak faith could overcome. Alas! that the faith of many should have failed, and that they should have made peace with the Church by their apostasy. Peter Martyr, greatly distressed at these lamentable defections, thus gave vent to his sorrows: "How can I refrain from lamentations, when I think that such a pleasant garden as the reformed church at Lucca presented to the view, has been so completely laid waste by the cruel tempest as scarcely to retain a vestige of its former cultivation? Those who did not know you might have entertained fears that you might not be able to resist the storm; it could never have entered into my mind that you would fall so foully. After the knowledge you had of the fury of Antichrist, and of the danger which hung over your heads, when you did not choose to re-

tire, by availing yourselves of what some call the common remedy of the weak, but which, in certain circumstances, I deem a wise precaution, your friends were disposed to say, 'These tried and brave soldiers of the cross will not fly, because they are determined, by their martyrdom and blood, to open a way for the progress of the gospel in their native country, emulating the noble examples which are given every day by their brethren in France, Belgium, and England.' Ah, how much have these hopes been disappointed! What matter of boasting has been given to our Antichristian oppressors. But this confounding catastrophe is to be deplored with tears rather than words."

Still the faith was not wholly driven from Lucca, where a number of good and honourable Christian families remained until they voluntarily emigrated to Geneva, and various parts of France, where the names of Turretini, and Burlemacchi, and Diodati became inseparably associated with the cause of the gospel.

The Milanese experienced the most horrible persecutions from the inquisitors, which they endured with the patience of Christian martyrs. Trezzio, a nobleman of Lodi, having withdrawn the concessions he had made in a moment of weakness, was burnt alive in 1558; two other Christians were committed to the flames, and one of them, when summoned to retract, nobly confessed the faith, for which he was driven into the fire with

blows and curses. A young priest, who had embraced the gospel, and refused to deny it, was half strangled, then roasted to death, and his body was thrown to the dogs.

Florence, now rejoicing in its freedom, was, in 1551, the scene of an auto-da-fé, in which twenty-two persons walked in procession as penitents, among whom was Panchiarichi, who had been ambassador to France. These men were clothed in cloaks and caps, painted with devils and crosses; the books found in their possession were cast into the flames, and thus were they publicly reconciled to the holy Catholic Church.

In Naples the fires of martyrdom were lighted up in the market-place, where two Christian noblemen were burnt to ashes, while numbers being informed against by the apostate Romans, were cast into miserable dungeons. How is the warning of the Lord, "He that saveth his life shall lose it," illustrated in the case of some of the Neapolitans, whose conduct is thus described: "Afraid of incurring the same punishment, or actuated by a desire to enjoy the pure worship of God, a considerable number of Protestants agreed to quit Italy, but when they came to the Alps, and stopped to take a last view of their beloved country, the greater part, struck with its beauties, and calling to mind the friends and comforts which they had left behind, burst into a flood of tears, and abandoning their purpose, returned to Naples. They

had scarcely arrived there when they were thrown into prison, and having submitted to penance, spent the remainder of their lives distrusted by those around them, and preyed upon by remorse and a consciousness of self-degradation."

In Calabria the most desperate convicts were promised their pardon as the reward of persecuting the heretics, whom they tracked through the woods and drove to the most desolate scenes, where many perished from starvation. Others were subjected to the most cruel tortures, to induce them to confess crimes they had never committed, and to inculpate their companions in the faith, while the sufferings inflicted on the tender sex are too shameful to relate.

Montalto was the scene of barbarities which a Roman Catholic could compare to nothing but the slaughter of so many sheep: "They were all shut up in one house, as in a sheepfold. The executioner went and bringing out one of them, covered his face with a napkin, or *benda*, as we call it, led him out to a field near the house, and, causing him to kneel down, cut his throat with a knife. Then, taking off the bloody napkin, he went and brought out another, whom he put to death after the same manner. In this way the whole number, amounting to eighty-eight men, were butchered."

Rome, being immediately under the eye of the Pope, did not escape those scenes which disgraced

so many other parts of Italy. Under the reigns of Julius III., Paul III., Pius IV., and Pius V., the work of persecution went on at a fearful rate. Martyrs were every day burnt, hanged, or beheaded; all the prisons were filled, and new ones had to be built, and men, of whom the world was not worthy, were sacrificed, until none were left to witness for the truth. Amongst those martyrs we find the names of Faventino Fanio, Domenichino della Casa, Bianca, Algieri, Francesco Gamba, the two Paschalis, Pietro Carneschini Mollio, and Paleario. As the admirable work of Paleario is now being attentively read by many in Italy, it may be well here to notice the fidelity with which he gave his dying testimony to Christ. The Romish annalist says, that when Paleario "saw that he could produce nothing in defence of his party, falling into a rage, he broke out in these words, 'Seeing your eminences have so many credible witnesses against me, it is unnecessary for you to give yourselves or me longer trouble. I am resolved to act according to the advice of the blessed Apostle Peter, when he says, Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps who did no evil, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously. Proceed, then, to give judgment—pronounce sentence on Aonio, and thus gratify his adversaries and fulfil your office.'"

John Mollio, whose acquaintance with the gospel and zeal for its promotion have been noticed in connection with Bologna, where he preached to the people and filled a chair in the University, was cited to Rome, in consequence of his lectures on the doctrine of justification by faith alone. So ably did he defend his sentiments that his judges were compelled to admit their truth, and he was sent back to Bologna, but not without an admonition to abstain from explaining the Epistles of St. Paul. Continuing to preach and teach the truth of the gospel, he was again summoned before the Inquisition, where he was arraigned before six cardinals and their assessors. In their presence he witnessed the following good confession:—

"As for you, cardinals and bishops," said he, "if I were satisfied that you had justly obtained that power which you assume to yourselves, and that you had risen to your eminence by virtuous deeds, and not by blind ambition and the arts of profligacy, I would not say a word to you. But since I know that you have set moderation, and modesty, and honour, and virtue at defiance, I am constrained to treat you without ceremony, and to declare that your power is not from God, but from the devil. If it were apostolical, as you would make the poor world believe, then your manner of life would resemble that of the apostles. But when I perceive the filth, and falsehood, and profaneness with which it is overspread, what can I

think or say of your Church, but that it is a receptacle of thieves and a den of robbers?

"You thirst without ceasing for the blood of the saints. Can you be the successors of the holy apostles and vicars of Jesus Christ—you who despise Christ and his Word—you who act as if you did not believe there was a God in heaven—you who persecute to the death his faithful ministers, make his commandments of no effect, and tyrannize over the consciences of his saints? Therefore I appeal from your sentence, and summon you, cruel tyrants and murderers, to answer before the judgment-seat of Christ at the last day, where your pompous titles and gorgeous trappings will not dazzle, nor your guards and torturing apparatus terrify."

Stung by these reproaches his judges are said to have gnashed upon him with their teeth, and ordered him to instant execution.

We have seen that Italy had its noble army of martyrs and confessors, who were valiant for the truth upon the earth. From the sad times just reviewed, until our own day, that land has been without the light of the gospel, with the exception of any feeble glimmer of truth that may have been tolerated in the dwellings of officials representing our own or any other Protestant country. To trace the history of Protestantism we have, therefore, to pass over an interval of nearly three centuries, during which the grim tyrant of Rome has

held his subjects in chains, sitting in the temple of God, and exalting himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped, "causing all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

CHAPTER III.

HOW TO OBSERVE AND ESTIMATE THE WORK OF GOD IN ITALY.

THE German maxim, that "we see what we look for," applies as much to religion as to any class of subjects that can occupy the attention of the observer. A number of travellers might now descend into Italy through the valley of Aosta, and pass to the farthest south, whose reports as to the state of this peninsula, though correctly describing all that had been witnessed, would be so varied as to appear contradictory. Even if two of these travellers were religious persons, expecting to see and ready to welcome the evidences of a great improvement in the religious condition of the country; one might assure us that no change has passed over the moral scene, that Popish superstition and Popish morals were as rife as ever; while from the other we might learn such delightful facts as would convince us that the work of Evangelization is proceeding with great success.

The truth that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation," applies with all its original force to the present religious condition of Italy.

Although the Lord is now performing his own great work in that land, it will not arrest the attention of the ordinary observer, who goes only to contemplate the beauties of the scene or study the perfect works of art. When Barnabas went forth from Jerusalem to Antioch, "he saw the grace of God" as he only could see it whose heart had come under its influence and whose enlightened eye was practised to discern and recognize it. Another visitor, whether Jew or Gentile, would have seen no change in the idolatrous city; the temple of Daphne was still crowded with worshippers, the groves polluted with impure rites, and the whole city intent on worldly pursuits or vain pleasures.

This "good man," who was "full of the Holy Ghost," went to the idolatrous city that he might verify the tidings conveyed to the Church in Jerusalem. He visited the great number that had believed, entering into their assemblies, uniting in their worship, and hearing their professions of faith in Christ. In this way the work of God in Italy will be seen by those who are not only prepared to acknowledge true Christian piety, but are diligent in seeking for the company of the faithful, attending their meetings, entering their churches, visiting their schools, and hearing from their own lips how the kingdom of Christ prospers.

Much harm has frequently been done to the cause of Christian missions to the heathen and of

Protestant labours in Popish countries, not by positive exaggeration so much as by a figurative and highly-coloured method of representing the truth. The lively imagination and the poetic temperament are not satisfied with simple facts and dry statistics, and in too many cases the reports of religious societies, by grouping together in a few pages all the good results of a year's labour spread over an extensive country, have unintentionally conveyed the impression that it has become the kingdom of Christ, or that the whole population is crowding into its sacred portals. These scenes have been afterwards visited by infidels or irreligious persons who have never entered a school or a sanctuary, and perhaps never seen or cared to see them, and who, on returning to England, have given an unqualified denial to all the statements of the missionary. Christian men, too, have passed through these foreign scenes, and traversed long distances before they have come to those verdant spots which they had expected to behold everywhere. It is easy to account in these cases for the triumph of those who have eyes but see not, and for the disappointment of others who had expected too much from missionary operations. We must be careful, in this review of evangelistic labours in Italy, not to justify the contradiction of the enemy or disappoint the expectations of the friend.

While these cautions must be carefully ob-

served, it may be well at the same time to bespeak a due estimate of the facts recorded by labourers in the field and by those who have been permitted to see them at their work. If a visible change has not already been produced in the religious and moral aspect of Italy, if Protestant churches or chapels are not springing up in every city and town, if the Christian Sabbath is not duly solemnized, if Christian morality is still openly outraged, if frivolity and the rage for light and sinful pleasures have not been replaced by the grave and earnest deportment of holy men and women, if all the people are not furnished with Bibles and engaged in their careful and devout perusal, let no one hastily conclude that "all things continue as they were," and that as yet the work of the Lord has not been commenced. This would be to "despise the day of small things," to close the eyes on the dawn which is breaking, or to undervalue the sower in his labours because the golden harvest has not already crowned those labours with success.

We can now speak of the seed-time in Piedmont, Milan, Lombardy, Tuscany, Bologna, Modena, Parma, Naples, and Sicily, and in the environs of Rome. Those vast fields, which until recently had been scorched by intense fires, on which no dew or heavenly rain descended, where no incorruptible seed had been cast, and where no fruits of righteousness were gathered, are now

thrown open to the Christian labourer, and the gentle rain from heaven blesses the seed sown. Let us believe the promise, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

The case of Genoa may be adduced to illustrate these observations. More than twenty years since, the Rev. R. M. M'Cheyne thus described the moral aspect of that city:—

"Genoa is one of the most beautiful towns in the world—most of the houses and churches are of pure white marble, and, from the sea, look like palaces; but Satan's seat is there. We dared not distribute a single tract or book in Genoa; we would have been imprisoned immediately. The Catholic priests, in their black dismal cloaks, and the monks, with their coarse brown dress tied with a cord, a crucifix and beads hanging round their necks, bare feet and cowl, swarm in every street. I counted that we met twenty of them in ten minutes' walk. Popery reigns here triumphant, yet the people 'are sitting still and at ease,' living for this world only."

A visitor to Genoa in the present day, who is

not careful to seek for the evidences of religious improvement, might state with perfect truth that he observes nothing different from what this pious writer saw at the period of his visit. The careful Christian traveller, who knows "how to observe" the signs of the times, does not fail to mark gratifying proofs of a most important change. The excellent deputation who visited this city in 1857, and from whose report this extract is quoted, say :—

"It is different now: tracts and copies of the Holy Scriptures are freely distributed without let or hindrance; two Protestant congregations (exclusive of the Scotch Church and the Church of England) meet as often as they think fit, on Sundays and week days; and the priests of the dismal cloaks, aided by all the power of the Archbishop of the Pallium, are unable to put down the Christian assemblies; a commodious place of worship for the ancient people of the Alps is in the course of erection; the monks of the coarse dress are turned out of their convents, and have the alternative of a pension for life, or a home in some of the monasteries reserved out of the general abolition. Popery still reigns, but it is no longer triumphant, and priests are no longer exempt from the punishment due to crime and misdemeanour. The people still live for this world, but are no longer 'still and at ease.' A spirit of inquiry has come in with religious toleration; and the night of ignorance is invaded by the light of a Protestant

press, protected by the strong arm of the law and by a Constitutional Government. Viewed in this light, the brethren of the Alps and of Italy have done already a great work. The introduction of the gospel into Genoa must be considered as the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in the eyes of those who saw Genoa and Turin twenty years ago. But taken absolutely and in its own limited space, it is with the Italian evangelists the day of small things as yet, and the Waldenses may only be said to be planting their Church at Genoa."

In the same spirit another Christian observer visiting Genoa in July, 1860, tells us that as soon as he landed he was surprised and delighted to see a colporteur standing close to the railway station offering for sale Bibles and Testaments, in English, French, Italian, Hebrew, and Greek. Our observer speaks of the diligence of the colporteur, who soon sold one of his Bibles to a Russian traveller, who, he adds, may thus have possessed himself of that which would prove to him the greatest of treasures. He then adds as the result of his own observations and inquiries, that "Piedmont takes the lead in this movement, and that Tuscany is fast following in its steps, so that you may now buy a Bible in the most crowded thoroughfare of its capital."

Happily we have not to inquire whether, throughout the newly-formed kingdom of Italy, it has become lawful to read the Bible; to erect Protestant churches and chapels; to assemble for

religious fellowship and devotion; to give utterance, by preaching, conversation, and writing, to religious opinions; to stand in the public thoroughfares and sell the sacred Scriptures and religious books opposed to the doctrines of Popery; to carry them through the country offering them for sale among the peasantry; and to open schools in which the Word of God is taught to the young. The question to be answered is not whether such rights now exist in these countries, where a few years ago they were unknown, but whether they are now duly improved; whether, especially, the incorruptible seed of the Word is dispersed, and if so to what extent; whether there are assemblies of those who fear the name of the Lord, and speak often one to another; whether sanctuaries are now rising up where before they were not tolerated; and whether, though amidst much priestly opposition preachers proclaim the gospel, the people crowd to hear, and sinners are converted to God. If all these great ends are secured there is no reason for the enemies of the gospel to triumph, or for its friends to despond.

That there exists a considerable diversity in the agencies now in operation for the evangelization of Italy, is well known to those who have given their attention to its present religious condition. The work of the Lord is carried forward with much zeal by the Vaudois, by the Fratelli (brethren), and by Signor Gavazzi, the man who above all others seems to have been raised up as the reformer

of his countrymen, the eloquent and enlightened preacher, and it may be the founder of an ecclesiastical organization to meet the spiritual wants of the new converts. To the efforts of these workers must be added an extensive agency for the distribution of the Holy Scriptures and religious publications, by means of depôts and colportage, and, to meet the wants of the young, the opening of schools for religious instruction. Italian Christians, grateful for their emancipation from the tyranny of the Romish priesthood, claim the right of thinking and acting for themselves in reference to the constitution of the Church of Christ, and are not disposed to submit to the domination of any Protestant community, whatever may be its scriptural or historical claims. They have "one Lord, one faith," and, though differing in outward forms as to the mode and subjects of baptism, they have the "one baptism" of the Holy Spirit.

Happily, there is in this country, among the friends of the religious movement in Italy, a general if not a universal conviction that no efforts should be made to impress on the Italian converts any particular form of church order. Dissenters contemplate with great satisfaction the erection of churches by the Vaudois, whose services will be conducted according to the liturgy they have used during their long history, while Episcopalians are happy to aid the evangelistic labours of the Fratelli, in whose simple modes of service free prayer only is

used. With the preference each party among us entertains for its own particular church, the expectation seems to be cherished that Italian converts will eventually assume the form we deem most scriptural, or at least that the leading churches existing among us will all be represented in the future ecclesiastical state of Italy. How far these expectations are to be realized or disappointed it is now scarcely possible to determine. It may be that among a people who ignore the name of Protestant, and whose temperament differs materially from our own, we shall find no disposition to conform strictly to the type of our British churches, ancient or modern, while strong claims will be presented to the confidence and esteem of all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth.

Mr. Henry Dunn, who in 1857-8 made a tour through the greater part of Italy, and had much intercourse with the converts from Popery, thus expresses his opinion as to the possible future of the Church in that country: "What it may ultimately become none can say. It is in the hands of God. The Italians have evidently their own work to do, and only He can enable them to do it. In the meantime, their preservation from the dominant influence of any sects and denominations should be fervently desired by all who care more for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom than for the triumph of a party.

"It *may* be—for who can read the mysterious purposes of the Most High?—that Protestantism has hitherto been all but excluded from Italy that *there* may at length be planted simpler and purer forms of religion than any that have yet taken root in any other countries of Europe. It *may* be that in such simpler forms alone can the Church successfully contend with that torrent of democracy which is ever rolling on, and which before long will assuredly sweep away every form of priesthood in its course. It *may* be that Rome, so long the centre of the great apostasy, is destined also to witness a new and better reformation than even that which Luther was honoured to introduce. This at least we know, that God is now throughout Italy gathering in a people for Himself."

In the following pages attention will be directed to all who are working in the Lord's vineyard in the fair fields of Italy, and care will be taken to avoid equally all exaggeration and disparagement. It will be for the reader to determine as to the methods best calculated to advance the kingdom of the Saviour, or whether all are not alike entitled to sympathy and co-operation, as in their different methods they are testifying to His supreme authority, and making known His gospel. It may perhaps be that each division in this little army of Christians has something to learn of the other, as it is with ourselves at home, where each body of believers is conscientiously guarding some particu-

lar fragment of that universal truth of which no one may claim the monopoly.

As far as possible, each religious body whose characteristics and labours have to pass under review will be permitted to speak for itself, while the most valuable testimonies will be adduced by visitors who have gone to the fields of Christian activity and "seen the grace of God."

CHAPTER IV.

VALUE OF RECENT POLITICAL CHANGES IN ITALY—CONNECTION OF CIVIL WITH RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

It was said of the venerable Dr. Bogue that he could read a newspaper as devoutly as many Christians could read their Bibles. In his day the judgments of God were abroad in the earth, and as the thrones of despots were overturned, their iron sceptres broken, and the fetters removed from mind and thought, from speech and writing, he saw how God in His providence was accomplishing the purposes of His grace. Most devout Christians love those higher and serene regions in which they may meditate, praise, and pray; and, if left to their own choice, would not descend into the scenes of worldly conflict and political change; and yet, not being politicians from taste or by profession, and while disposed to "let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth," we can often perceive a most intimate connection between great political convulsions, and the interests of that "kingdom which cannot be moved."

Without participating in the spirit of the mere worldly politician, and viewing the dynastic changes

and secular revolutions of this age only in their relation to the kingdom of Christ, we cannot fail to perceive how the Lord is now shaking the nations, and preparing a highway along which the gospel may advance with triumph. When kings and priests combine to silence the voice of the faithful preacher, to prevent the reading of the Word of God, to brand the gospel as heresy, and inflict the heaviest penalties on its professors, we should be wanting in loyal devotion to Christ were we not to unite in the prayer, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And when tyrants are hurled from those thrones on which they were unworthy to sit, and driven away before the face of their oppressed and enraged subjects; when a wide and effectual door is opened for the distribution of the sacred Scriptures, and the preaching of the gospel; when the labourers are permitted to enter the field, and break up the fallow ground, and sow the incorruptible seed of the Word, a voice sounds from the throne of God in heaven, "Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great;" and we should join the anthem of the redeemed, as they contemplate the fall of the mystic Babylon, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her."

If we gain instruction from reading the history of the Church during the centuries that have

passed, or anticipate its future prosperity as predicted in the revelation of Jesus Christ, should we not watch with intense interest the work which the Lord is doing in our own day, that "short work" by which nations have been born in a day to the blessings of civil and religious freedom? The recent revolutions that have taken place in Italy have filled some of the most intelligent and hopeful with astonishment, and with the most devout admiration of Him who is "excellent in working," and who at the appointed time raises up suitable instruments for his work in the earth. He must be blind indeed who cannot see the hand of the Lord in the revolutions by which the greater part of Italy has been rescued from secular and spiritual despotism, and laid open to the blessed influences of evangelical truth.

Referring, then, to those great events by which Italy has become the land of the free, we must, in tracing them to their source, look to Piedmont in 1848, when that country obtained the benefits of a constitutional government. The Rev. B. H. Cooper, in his Life and Career of Count Cavour, shows the important part taken by that great man in securing this invaluable concession in favour of his country. The author says: "Already in the exciting January and February days of 1848, before the great crisis in public affairs had as yet taken place, Count Cavour took the opportunity to make his personal influence felt. Genoa,

the most ardent city in the kingdom, rose in tumult, and demanded, besides political franchise, the arming of the nation and the banishment of the Jesuits. On the island of Sardinia, which till then had been thought to be wholly subject to clerical influence, more and more violent threats against the order of Loyola were uttered. Deputations from different towns went to Turin to give expression to their desires for a constitution, who, however, for the most part, were obliged to return to their respective provinces without having obtained a hearing either from the king or from the ministers. Thousands of disquieting rumours were afloat in the city, as to the designs of the sovereign, and the secret plans of the Camarilla, and a dangerous storm seemed to lower on the horizon. The helplessness of the cabinet daily added to the ferment. To the moderate patriots no choice was left save to lay the weight of their counsels in the balance of the king's decisions, unless the throne and the country were to be abandoned to the rising flood of the aroused passions of the people. A deputation which had arrived from Genoa, brought about a meeting of the representatives of the Turin press, at which propositions were made to petition the king to hasten the concession of various reforms. Count Cavour went further, and moved that the granting of a constitution should be asked for. Almost all present gave a hearty consent to his proposal."

This bold step was followed up by others on the part of Cavour and his friends. The municipality of Turin, on the 5th of February, 1848, resolved to petition the king to grant his people a constitution; and two days afterwards he conceded the vast boon which these patriots had asked in the name of the people.

Not with feelings of national pride, but with gratitude to God for our national privileges, we refer to the share which our own country may claim in the honour of imparting to Sardinia the benefits of representative government. Those who have carefully studied our laws and read our history have not now to learn that, to a very great extent, our civil and criminal codes correspond with the statutes delivered to the Israelites by the hand of Moses, while the principle on which our whole legislation is based admits the right of the people to make the laws by which they are governed.

The writer to whom we have just referred thus speaks of the protracted visit of Count Cavour to England, by which he formed a practical acquaintance with the value of constitutional government, as contrasted with the arbitrary system he had seen in his own country:—

"Impelled by the desire to witness for himself the greatness of the freest and most powerful country in Europe, viz., Great Britain, the young Count resolved on a voyage to London. This visit to the metropolis of the world was prolonged to a

stay of many years. Everything here contributed to his becoming captivated with English manners and English political life. His first impressions of the great life of London, the ever-fresh, ever-unwearied ebb and flow of business in the streets, the free out-spoken tone of all political tendencies, heightened his old predilection for England into enthusiasm. What a difference between the sub-Alpine capital and this centre of the world's commerce—between the sluggish repose of his own country and the English people's own consciousness of national rights, free, full of life, fermenting in all classes of the population! How wide the chasm between the narrow prejudices of the Piedmontese aristocracy and the large-hearted views of the British nobility—between the marionettes of the Jesuits, who, at Turin, were wont to figure at the court and in the government, and the statesmen of England! Such comparisons may well, on the one hand, have painfully affected the Piedmontese nobleman, and filled him with a patriotic sense of shame; but, on the other hand, they powerfully impelled him to study, in all its details, that political organization, complicated indeed, but yet the growth of Nature, in virtue of which the English people has become the most powerful on earth, and to make himself master of those very difficult questions which agitated England and Europe in general."

They who trace great political changes to

their source, have not failed to mark the influence of the present Pope, Pius IX., on the political convulsions which disturbed the greater part of Europe in the memorable year 1848, and on the vigorous popular action which has since relieved Italy of her tyrannical princes, and left to the Sovereign Pontiff only a fragment of his former domains. Giovanni Mastai, on his accession to the pontifical chair, was beloved by all his subjects, and regarded as a pattern of meekness and benevolence, "a man to do honour to any creed and profession." The highest expectations cherished by his people were far exceeded by the amnesty he granted, and those enlightened measures which soon made all Europe ring with the praises of "the reforming Pope."

If the Pope and the Italian princes who, to some extent, imitated his example, failed to carry out the beneficial reforms they had begun, the King of Sardinia did not retrace his steps, but left to his successor a rich legacy of just principles, which have imparted happiness to his subjects, and led to the enormous increase of his kingdom. In 1848, Jews and Protestants in Piedmont first tasted the sweets of religious liberty, and the descendants of the persecuted Vaudois obtained the right of publicly worshipping God according to the manner of their forefathers.

It has been affirmed, with perfect truth, that "since that eventful year, Italy has made more

progress in all that constitutes the true life of a nation than for three hundred years before, when the light of the Reformation which at first dawned so auspiciously, and illuminated not a few of her cities, and some of her most famous sons, was rudely quenched by the martyrdom or exile of the Reformers.

These views are supported by the judgment expressed by Dr. Meille, pastor of the Waldensian church in Turin, in the excellent paper he read at the Evangelical Alliance Conference in Paris in 1855. Referring to those barriers which had formerly opposed the spread of the gospel in Piedmont, Dr. Meille says: "When the set time marked by the Head of the Church for the manifestation of his elect in this country had arrived, not only were the barriers overthrown, but, wonderful and encouraging fact, this work was accomplished through the instrumentality of the most decided adversary of the gospel—a Pope a little less cruel than his predecessor, or, at any rate, more eager for popularity. Such was the starting-point of the movement, which, in Piedmont, and, for a time, in other parts of Italy, set aside the will of the ruling despot, and replaced it by settled constitutions; and, when the principle of a constitution was once acknowledged, it was impossible, in framing it, altogether to ignore the rights of that fractional portion of the people who did not profess the national religion. The existence of the Vaudois

church in Piedmont was then the means of introducing the elements of religious liberty into our constitution, which was not done anywhere else in Italy."

That the principles of religious liberty were not brought into full operation in Sardinia as soon as the king had made his concession in favour of Jews and Protestants, will occasion no surprise among those who remember the protracted struggle of these principles in our own country before their legitimate consequences were fully realized. The right to profess a Protestant creed did not include the right to defend it against the dogmas of Rome. It was not at first admitted that no honest mind can consistently maintain the faith of the gospel without feeling the necessity of denouncing the errors by which it is opposed, or at least on some occasions using language which might be construed into an attack on the Romish Church. Ten years after this first instalment of religious liberty was granted in Piedmont, three eminent teachers of the reformed faith, Mazzarella, Minetti, and Lagomarsino, were imprisoned in Alessandria for having ventured to controvert the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. The accused were charged with having attacked the religion of the State, particularly with denying the divine authority of the clergy, the authority of the Pope as vicar and representative of Christ, the divine institution of auricular confession, the existence of hell as a place of punishment, and of asserting that the worship of

images was idolatry. It should be observed that the question relating to hell was occasioned by the explanation of the article in the Creed, "He descended into hell," and that the accused had said that the hell there intended was not the place of the lost. Each of the accused was sentenced to eight days' imprisonment, and to a fine, prohibited from preaching, and subjected to the expense of the process.

Since the memorable year 1848, when, as we have seen, Protestants and Jews were acknowledged and tolerated in Piedmont, a still greater concession—the right to profess every form of religious faith—has been granted, not in Piedmont only, but throughout united Italy, extending—with the exception of Rome and Venetia—from the Alps to the Straits of Messina. Political revolutions have relieved Central as well as Southern Italy from the presence of those despots who used their power alike to gratify the love of arbitrary rule, and to do the bidding of the Romish priesthood.

The great man raised up by Divine Providence to continue the work begun by Cavour, has characterized the Bourbon government of Naples in terms equally applicable to the tyranny that repressed the efforts in favour of the gospel in Tuscany and the neighbouring States. Baron Ricasoli, in an admirable circular, dated August 24, 1861, says:—

"I will not dwell upon the bad government of

the Bourbons in the southern provinces; I will not be more severe than the representatives of the European Powers at the Congress of Paris in 1856, who denounced it to the judgment of civilized Europe as barbarous and savage; nor more stringent than the Hon. Mr. Gladstone, who in his place in the British Parliament, called it the negation of God—I will only say that the Bourbon government had for principle the corruption of everything and everybody—a corruption so universally carried out, and with such persistence, that it appears to us almost miraculous that those noble populations should ever have been able to extricate themselves from it; everything which in tolerably organized governments serves to strengthen, to discipline, and to moralize, there only served to weaken and deprave. The police was a privilege accorded to an association of malefactors to harass and plunder the people as they pleased, and to exercise espionage for the government."

Tuscany, where for a time the people were tolerated in professing the reformed faith, has of late years been the scene of the greatest intolerance to all who ventured to profess the gospel, to read the Scriptures, and instruct others in the truth. A few instances of this tyranny may be here recorded to show the evils from which Italy is now relieved:—

"On the last Sunday in March, 1855, Domenico Cecchetti, a Tuscan Protestant, was seized at half-

past four in the morning, hurried away from his children to the prison of the Bargello, condemned, without any trial, to a year's imprisonment in the penitentiary, whither he was conveyed in chains on the following morning, the crimes for which he was consigned to a dungeon being the possession of one Bible and two Testaments, and the avowal that Jesus Christ was the sole Head of the Church."

In 1853, Miss Cunningham was thrown into prison for the offence of giving away some religious tracts and New Testaments. Natale Lippi was imprisoned three months for having the Bible, the Pilgrim's Progress, and a few religious tracts in his house, having been condemned without trial.

In these cases the offence was professedly that of attempting to proselyte, as the courts admitted the right of every man to think as he pleased on religious questions, while denying his right to publish his thoughts. The Tuscan laws professed toleration, but punished the tolerated person who ventured to profess and defend his faith. An intelligent writer, describing these proceedings at the time of their occurrence, and writing from Florence, said: "A very common mode of procedure here is as follows:—A man becomes suspected in some way or other. The government has a host of spies constantly on the watch, and those agents, of course, are always seeking occasions to inform against some one, or inventing a charge if they cannot find such, merely to show

to their employers that they are active. The suspected individual is cited by the police to appear before them on such a day. He appears, and the president tells him that the government has had information regarding him, and already knows all. He asks, 'What information?' as he is not conscious of being an evil-doer. He is told that he is opposed to the religion of the state, that he reads the Bible and has prayer-meetings in his house, and, in short, is evidently bent on overturning the Holy Roman Catholic Church. He admits that he reads the Bible, and pleads that it is a good book, that he has a right to read it, that his conscience is free; but as to the meetings in his house for the purpose of propagandism, he says there is a mistake. 'Silence!' says the president; 'here we make no mistakes.' And so the infallible police go on with the examination, of which full minutes are taken by a writer. When it is ended, the minutes of examination are read over, and the man is asked if they are correct. If they be so, he is asked to sign them. He is then either sent to prison or allowed to return to his own house, as the case may be; but if allowed to return home he is warned that the government has its eye on him, and that if any further evil reports be heard about him he knows what he may expect. And all this for simply reading the Word of God to his own family."

In 1846, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who had

banished from his duchy an excellent Swiss lady, whose sole crime was her endeavour to do good in Pisa, where she had resided for sixteen years, gave a true picture of a crowned despot when he said, "I possess the right to banish from my dominions whomsoever I please, and to imprison my own subjects without assigning any reason; it is sufficient that I will it thus."

On the 27th of April, 1859, the man who had uttered these words had with his family to fly before the storm of popular indignation which his conduct had awakened, and to leave his oppressed subjects free to choose their own sovereign. A few months only had passed when they sought refuge and protection under the shadow of the Piedmontese king. On the 16th of August following, the Representative Assembly in Florence unanimously thus pronounced: "That the Austro-Lorraine dynasty, which, on the 27th April, 1859, abandoned Tuscany without leaving any form of government, and repaired to the camp of the enemy, has rendered itself absolutely incompatible with the order and welfare of Tuscany. The Assembly declares that there is no mode whatever by which the said dynasty can be re-established and maintained without outrage to the dignity of the country, without offending the feelings of the population, without unceasing and inevitable danger of seeing the public tranquillity constantly disturbed, and without injury to Italy. The

Assembly consequently declares that it is not possible either to recall or to receive back the Austro-Lorraine dynasty to reign again over Tuscany."

The excellent deputation from the Foreign Aid Society, visiting these interesting scenes in September, 1859, gives the most encouraging account of the advantages secured in favour of religious freedom in the smaller Italian states, from which their petty despots had found it expedient to make a rapid flight. Of the duchy of Modena, they say: "People of all classes have the most ample liberty of expressing their sentiments, both in speech and in writing, and their views and wishes as to their future destiny are unmistakeable. Repudiation of the ancient government, and an unshaken resolution to hold fast the liberties they have obtained, pervade every town and village, and form the subject of conversation in every piazza. In seeking to ascertain the sentiments of intelligent persons, with respect to the Papal system, we found it was for the most part held in abhorrence, not so much as a religion, as an instrument of bad government and hostile to liberty. The consequence of this feeling is, that the priests have lost the respect which would otherwise, as ministers of religion, be paid to them. 'We sometimes,' said an intelligent Italian gentleman, 'feel more pity than contempt for our priests, because we know that many of them feel with us that the

combination of secular government with spiritual authority is inconsistent and injurious to religion; we condemn the abuses of the ecclesiastical system, and we are aware of the corruptions of Christianity in the Church of Rome. Reforms are wanted in our religion; but as long as the Pope exercises a temporal sovereignty, and attempts to govern an unwilling people by priests, we consider the Pope and Austria as equally the enemies of our liberties and national independence.' But although there is this inveterate hatred of the Papal system as the enemy of all social and civil improvement, as the essence of absolutism which despotic rulers use for their own purposes, it is not against religion in the abstract that this bitter feeling is directed; and it is the opinion of many Roman Catholics, that the Pope of Rome would have more influence over the population of Roman Catholic countries in Europe, if he were divested of his temporal sovereignty and reigned at Rome as the acknowledged head of the Church. This might be so for a time, but the element of liberty and of a free press by the side of a spiritual despotism would, before long, begin to operate like the hidden source of water at the foundation of a gorgeous structure. Such a Pontifical throne, if established, would be gradually undermined by the freedom of thought and liberty of action which must necessarily accompany it; and the minister of Pope Pius IX. is a faithful servant of the master he

serves when he refuses to make the least concession or remove a single stone from the old edifice. It is encouraging for the religious future of Italy to find that intelligent men are not averse to enter on the subject of religion when it is laid before them in its scriptural purity. They readily listen to an *exposé* of the great truths of Christianity, and recognize their force when placed by the side of the Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, indulgences, etc.; and we believe when once the way is open for the Word of God to have free course in those emancipated states of Central Italy, not only will many who now have lost all belief in the Church of the Pope, begin to inquire for a more excellent way, but a multitude of the priests will again be seen to turn unto the Lord." In the same encouraging manner they speak of Modena, where they add: "We were assured by the highest authority, that liberty of conscience in religion and liberty of worship would hold a prominent place in the constitution of those states, and that whoever might choose to propagate his convictions by persuasive means and arguments would be protected by the laws and police. It is almost superfluous to add that we found in the celebrated chief, Garibaldi, the same liberal sentiments. Already two evangelists have made Sarzana a central station. Sarzana is the frontier town of the Sardinian-Genoese States, and touches on the borders of Massa-Carrara,

which is now comprised within the duchy of Modena. The provinces of the duchy, as well as those of Parma, are now open to the Bible-hawker and the Scripture-reader."

The year 1860 was indeed an *Annus Mirabilis* for Italy, for freedom, and the gospel. That year saw the Neapolitans and Sicilians rise against the son and successor of a tyrannical monarch, who appears to have learned nothing from the Word of God but to copy the example of the youthful king of Israel, Rehoboam, when, in answer to the reasonable appeals of his subjects, he said, "Whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." (1 Kings xii. 11.)

On the 7th of September, 1860, this young king fled from his capital after a brief career of misrule, in which he disappointed the hopes of his people, rejected the wise counsels tendered by the British government, and servilely did the bidding of the Romish priesthood. The following day that beautiful capital was entered by a great general who reads the Bible and reveres its authority. He went not as the leader of a vast army to gain his conquests by the force of numbers or the skill of arms. The cruel monarch, wanting in courage as well as in humanity, had already fled from Naples, and the people, instead of offering resistence, or seizing the invader and

his few followers, received him, some as their deliverer from tyranny, and others, as a power too terrible to resist.

General Garibaldi, who was raised up by Divine Providence to be the deliverer of Naples and Sicily, has his place also among those who desire to witness the spiritual emancipation of their country from the despotism of Romish error and superstition. He knows the value of the Word of God as the instrument for effecting the spiritual deliverance of Italy. His famous declaration that "the Bible is the cannon which will liberate Italy," having come under the notice of the Evangelical Alliance, its president and committee requested permission to present to him a handsome copy of the Sacred Scriptures in various languages, and on making known their wish, received from the General the following reply :—

"Caprera, Feb. 17, 1861.

"SIR,—I am very grateful for all that the Christians of England have done for the welfare of men, and the rights of nations.

"The Evangelical Alliance, over which you preside, is a good work. I shall receive with pleasure, *by post*, the offer which you have made me of a Bible in many tongues; but I do not consent that a deputation of members of your Society should put themselves to inconvenience for the purpose. The great majority of the people among

us, if not Protestant in name, are very Protestant in fact, as is proved by the indifference—nay, even the contempt—with which they receive the anathemas of the Papacy, and by the public ridicule which the miracles excite.

"Be persuaded, Sir, that the Italian people is much less Popish than has been said. As for me, be good enough to believe me the irreconcileable enemy of hypocrisy, and of all despotism; and at the same time, your affectionate

"G. GARIBALDI."

That his generous aspirations embrace the highest interests of the people whose liberation he has been the means of effecting, is apparent from his benevolent appeal to the ladies of Italy. That document, which is worthy of preservation, shows that the writer has that spirit of practical Christian benevolence, which in its vigorous operation is now effecting great good in the moral wastes of our own land. In that appeal he says:—

"Some foreign ladies have conceived the idea, which I transmit to you, of improving the condition of our people morally and materially.

"They say: The political liberty acquired by the greater portion of the Peninsula does not suffice to the great mass of the people—they must likewise physically partake of its benefits, and attain that degree of education which alone can

emancipate them from the degrading prejudices under which the corrupt portion of mankind is desirous of keeping them.

"Bread, work, and education, these are the objects which their generous hearts ardently wish to bestow. Woman, with her innate tendency to educate a family, is more fit for such a purpose than man: she is more delicate in feeling, more generous.

"There exist already among us societies of mutual aid, societies of the working classes, and these institutions are much to be praised. But the wealthier classes, occupying a higher standing in the social scale, do they, with us, come down to meet the sons of the poor? Do they go to visit the hut, to get acquainted with its privations and sufferings? No.

"These societies, composed mostly of men of worth, but without wealth, carry words of comfort and sympathy to the couch of the infirm, to the hovel of the hungry, but often nothing else than words of comfort and sympathy.

"Let the powerful of the earth approach the poor, let them comfort, educate, assist them; there will then disappear in human society that immense gulf which separates the poor from the rich, which often makes them enemies, and, in many parts of Europe, makes the labouring classes desirous to upset social order, to proscribe employers as the only means—as they deem—of bettering their own

condition in this world, which to them is a world of misery and affliction.

"I have so deep a faith in the generous heart of our Italian ladies, without distinction of class, that I venture to address them, and invite them to realize this noble end. In the hundred cities of Italy let there be formed committees of ladies, with the object of collecting means of every kind in Italy and other parts of the world, to assist the needy and to establish schools for their education.

"We cannot attain perfection, impossible here below; but by improving the condition of the poor, and ennobling them, we can approach it, so that the title of a free and civilized people shall not be unrightfully assumed, and that mankind, according to the law of Christ, shall have no other members than brothers and sisters.

"G. GARIBALDI."

As every one must attach great importance to the opinions and principles of the heroic man whom the Great Ruler of nations has raised up to be the scourge of tyrants and the deliverer of the oppressed, it may be well to read from his own pen the sentiments by which he is animated in reference to the annihilation of despotism, spiritual and temporal, not in Italy only, but throughout Europe. These sentiments are honestly expressed in his letter, of July 16, 1861, to the Countess d'Ora d'Istria.

"MADAME,—I have read with admiration and gratitude your charming letter; it strengthens in me the opinion I have long entertained that woman is called by Providence to play the first part in the emancipation of oppressed nationalities, and in the annhilation of despotism. You are right, Madame; the Papacy is the most horrible plague that my poor country is afflicted with. Eighteen centuries of falsehood, persecution, and burning at the stake, in complicity with all the tyrants of Italy, rendered the plague incurable. At present, as heretofore, this vampire of the land of the Scipios supports its body, which is corrupted and eaten up by gangrene, by means of discord, reaction, pillage, and civil war; and it affords a pretext for keeping permanently in Italy a foreign army which by its influence prevents a generous nation from constituting itself. Hungary is at the present moment in a very delicate situation. The Hungarian people, who on the field of Italian liberty have cemented their fraternal alliance with us, well deserve the cooperation of the nations of Eastern Europe, whose cause is identical with theirs. The Servians, Croats, and Dalmatians have adhered to the national aspiration of the Magyars. The Moldo-Wallachians ought to imitate that example, and I entertain the full conviction that you will exercise your high influence over your countrymen to draw closer the paternal ties which ought henceforth to unite the Eastern races with the sister races of the Centre

and West of Europe. When nations shall love each other and be in accord, as required by the laws of Christ and of humanity, they will realize the dreams of happiness in which I have indulged at all the epochs of my life.

"G. GARIBALDI."

CHAPTER V.

THE WALDENSES—THEIR COUNTRY—CHURCH CONSTITUTION—AND LABOURS IN ITALY.

ALTHOUGH Italy has recently afforded to its Christian visitors several openings for successful labour, which may be greatly enlarged, it is the opinion of Italian Christians and their friends, that the work of evangelization must be conducted principally by Italians. We cannot speak of Italy, or any country in which Christianity is professed, as a purely missionary field, into which our emissaries should be sent, as into Pagan and Mohammedan countries, to proclaim as for the first time the kingdom of Jesus Christ. While thankfully employing any channels of communication that may open to us in the divine providence, by sending the Sacred Scriptures and religious books, or by conversing with fellow-travellers, and such persons as may be accessible, our hopes must be directed to native intelligence, and pious zeal guided by the Spirit of God.

We must pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest, but we expect that by far the greater number of those labourers will

be such as having been formerly under the influence of Romish error, have thrown off the oppressive load, and come forth to enjoy the liberty wherewith Christ makes them free. As they are called to the work, it becomes our great privilege to help them, but without interfering with their freedom of action in doing the will of the Lord.

Our design, in speaking of the work of God in Italy, is faithfully to describe the various workers, without undertaking to discuss the peculiar merits of any party—a task which can be performed only with great difficulty and with little satisfaction.

It must not be concealed that among the best friends of Italy, and those who most earnestly pray for its evangelization, there is much diversity of opinion as to the agency which may prove most effective in accomplishing the great work. By some of our friends, the Waldenses are regarded as the principal, if not the sole workers by whom the field should be occupied; while others are disposed to look upon them as intruders, and claim that field exclusively for the brethren of the free churches. Is it not better to welcome all who are ready to do the work of the Lord in the extensive region which is open to all, and needs the labours of all? In this early stage of the work, it will certainly be well to encourage the Christian zeal of all who are seeking to build up the tabernacle of the Lord.

Most becoming, and deserving our imitation, is

the spirit displayed by the deputation from the Foreign Aid Society, who in their intercourse with the Waldenses and the Italian brethren, "urged the necessity of mutual love and forbearance, and of allowing each party engaged in the work of evangelization . . . their own views in matters of ecclesiastical order, while supporting each other in furtherance of the pure gospel." It is gratifying to know that "the Italians both at Turin and Genoa acknowledged with frankness and gratitude the sympathy they always received from their Waldensian brethren whenever they were in trouble from the civil power: the 'Table Vaudoise' came to their defence as to the common cause of religious liberty. The deputation add that with such feelings mutually expressed, they cannot perceive why the Italians and the Waldensians should not labour in the gospel side by side; at the same time it is apparent that any foreign attempts to unite them under a common code of regulations would prove abortive."

The ancient Waldensian church having entered with much zeal into the work of Italian evangelization, it may be well that the record of its labours should be preceded by a brief notice of its present condition.

The little territory of the Waldenses, made up of rugged mountains and narrow valleys, would fall under the eye of an imaginary spectator stationed on the Monte Viso, which holds a con-

spicuous place in the range of the Alps, dividing France from Piedmont. From this inaccessible post of observation, looking in a northern and north-easterly direction, the Vaudois country might be traced into the plains of Piedmont, and a little beyond La Tour. The Waldensian population is very little more than twenty-three thousand, occupying sixteen parishes, of which four are mountainous, and the rest in the valleys.

It is scarcely necessary to state, that the occupations of the people are principally agricultural, of the humblest kind, and that a scanty subsistence is won from the rugged soil, by great labour, and not without much peril. Shut up in their circumscribed territory, the people are obliged to climb the precipitous sides of mountains, in search of produce, and the industrious labourers are often seen clinging to the rocks, where they appear like specks, a thousand feet aobve the valley, keeping their hold by the crampons on their feet.

It is gratifying to find that, as the confinement and oppression of former years are removed from the Waldenses, they are engaging in more profitable kinds of labour, and acquiring the benefits of education in their numerous well-taught parish schools, to which schools of industry are being added. Small Roman Catholic congregations are found in the larger villages, but the bulk of the people retain the faith of their forefathers, and are

determined, according to their ability, to carry the light of the gospel into Italy.

The perfect toleration of the Waldenses, secured to them by the Constitution granted by King Charles Albert in 1848, has had an important influence on the extension and prosperity of their church. No longer shut up in their valleys, they carried the light of truth first into Piedmont, and afterwards in various parts of Italy.

As the Waldensian church is seeking to impress its own character on the mind of Italy, the Constitution of that church becomes a subject of the deepest interest. The following extracts from a paper on "The Vaudois" prepared with much care, will give in brief as much information as may be required on this point:—

"Its Constitution is Presbyterian. A Synod is held every year, in the month of May, and an election is then made of a moderator, and of four other members—two ecclesiastics and two laymen—who, with the moderator, constitute the 'Table;' and to this Table is committed the management of the affairs of the Church throughout the year, subject only to the control of the Synod. When the Synod meets, the Table ceases to have power, and gives an account of its proceedings for the past year to the Synod; the latter, before breaking up, nominates the Table for the ensuing year.

"In doctrine, the Vaudois Church may truly

be said to 'show that uncorruptness, gravity, and sincerity,' which St. Paul recommended to Titus. Free from all trace of sectarianism, the Vaudois Liturgy exhibits a Scriptural and devout spirit, which must commend it to all sober-minded Christians. Still, it is not meant to be inferred that the Vaudois Liturgy, excellent as it is, is comparable, *as a Liturgy*, with that which we possess in our English Book of Common Prayer; they have no such service as our Litany; nor is there that *joining* in prayer and praise, by minister and people, which makes the Service of the Church of England so lively and hearty; the chief part in which a Vaudois congregation joins, is the singing of psalms and hymns, and in this they certainly excel, singing as they do from books containing both music and words, and the music being harmonized for three or four voices, trebles, altos, tenors, and basses. In singing, the time is *slower* than we are generally accustomed to, and this, and the great numbers blending their voices together, produces a very deep and solemn feeling.

"The service on a Sunday begins with the reading of a portion of Holy Scripture, by the head schoolmaster, or 'regent' as he is called, followed by the reading of the Ten Commandments, and our Lord's summary of them, as the love of God and of our neighbour; then (most appropriately) follows a general confession of sin, which is offered up by the pastor on behalf of him-

self and the congregation; the service then proceeds with prayers from the Liturgy, and the singing of psalms or hymns; then follows the sermon; and the service concludes with the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and the Benediction.

"Infant baptism is the form, and, as appears from their Liturgy, the only form of baptism ordinarily used in the Vaudois Church. When the children who have been thus baptized attain a sufficient age, they are prepared most carefully, and during the long period of two whole years, for the ratification of their baptismal vows, and their admission to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and they are then received, in a most excellent and impressive service, prescribed by the Liturgy, and corresponding in effect with confirmation in the Church of England.

"Nothing can be more simple, and at the same time more affecting, than their celebration of the Lord's Supper. The service is conceived in a spirit equally removed from a superstitious ritualism, and a low or irreverent view of the sacrament. The exhortations to the communicants are of a most serious and heart-searching kind; and the prayers are those of deep penitence and earnest faith. In the consecration of the elements, the minister, on breaking the bread, solemnly says: 'The bread which we break, and which we bless, is the communion of the body of Jesus Christ, which was broken for us!' and on taking the cup into his

hand: 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is the communion of his blood, the blood of the New Testament, which was shed for the remission of our sins.' The men first come forward, usually two at a time, to the table, and receive the bread and wine from the minister, and then the women come in similar order, by themselves. No particular words of administration are used, but the minister throughout this part of the rite, recites a number of short, well-chosen texts of Scripture, applicable to each and all the communicants, individually and collectively. The proportion of communicants to the congregation is very large—commonly, out of six hundred persons, not ten will leave without receiving.

"Their Liturgy contains also prayers and a table of lessons for the chief festivals and fasts of the Church—Christmas, Good-Friday, Easter, Ascension, and Whitsuntide; also very admirable services for the celebration of marriage, for the consecration of ministers, for the assembling of the Synod, for times of public calamity, and for the burial of the dead; and also a collection of prayers to be used in schools and families, and by persons in private; and there is also contained in the same book, the Confession of Faith of the Vaudois Church, as published in the year 1655, consisting of Thirty-three Articles, and embodying in terse and conspicuous language the main doctrines of the Christian faith.

"It is now time to say something about the excellent men who labour in the ministry. These are the Pastors, the Professors, and the Evangelists; but it is chiefly of the pastors of whom it is necessary to speak here, regarding, as we may, the pastors and their congregations, as the living representatives of the ancient Church of the valleys. These worthy pastors, fifteen in number, are the ministers of the several parishes into which the valleys are ecclesiastically divided; their duties are very laborious, especially in winter, as it is in that season that the population can best be gathered for instruction, the young in the schools, and the adults in the meetings which are held for religious converse and prayer, preparatory to the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and at other times for mutual edification. These parochial visitations are constantly held by the pastor during the winter, when the schools are in full activity; and the pastor is often occupied from morning till night and has to traverse the mountains, through the snow and mist, long after dark, over difficult, and sometimes dangerous paths; many of the schools and other places of meeting, being in remote and scattered hamlets. So wearing is this life, that *sixty* is aged for a pastor, and is about the age for retirement; some break down in early life."

It is gratifying to notice the times of refreshing which have visited the Vaudois churches. Showers of blessings have descended on those

valleys and mountains, on which in the dark ages the Lord so abundantly "commanded the blessing even life for evermore." From recent reports we learn that the pastors find it difficult to satisfy the demands of the people to preside at their numerous prayer-meetings.

One of these pastors says: "The winter which is just gone has been a blessed season for my parish, and I trust for many others in these valleys. The prayer-meetings have been well attended, and great seriousness been manifested. Everywhere there has been an apparent hunger and thirst for the Word of God, and there is no doubt that many sinners have found peace at the foot of the cross. As on week days these meetings can only be held at night they cannot be very numerous. I have had three regularly in different parts of my parish, sometimes even six, and the interest is still kept up. Many people would like to see me arrive every evening; and when I remember that formerly they had taste only for earthly good, and only cared for worldly interests, I am persuaded that a great change has taken place, a change great enough to lead me to believe that the Spirit of God has breathed here. What I have seen with my own eyes in some of the other parishes, or what the pastors told me of it, shows evidently that the religious movement is nearly general in our Church. Wherever the pastors have worked faithfully, and with a spirit of prayer, they have been rejoiced by

seeing some fruit of their labours. Now we would need not *tens* but *hundreds* of labourers to send forth to the extremities of that Italy which has been opened to the gospel so much sooner than we expected. However, as it is quite evident that the Lord never asks the impossible from us, our only care must be to work faithfully in the sphere which He has assigned to us, asking Him to prepare labourers in abundance. Meanwhile, till there be at least one well-qualified evangelist in every important town, the colporteurs, and especially the Bible and religious books which they are scattering, are doing their preparatory work.

In Waldensian phraseology, the term "Church" (Eglise) is always applied to the *congregation*, the living members of the community; the word "Temple" being used to denote the *edifice* in which they assemble for worship.

These "temples" are most of them very rude and simple structures, particularly those in the remote mountain parishes; but the new temple, lately built at La Tour, is a large and handsome edifice. It was on the occasion of the consecration of this temple, in the year 1844, that the late king of Sardinia, Charles Albert, came into the valleys, and honoured his loyal Vaudois subjects with a visit, which gave equal pleasure to king and people.

The temple at La Tour is a commodious and handsome building, capable of holding a thousand persons. La Tour has also a college, founded by

the exertions of the late Dr. Gilly, containing from eighty to a hundred scholars and students in the lower and upper classes; near the college is a girl's school for the middle classes, and a school for poor children, somewhat resembling our ragged schools. There is also an hospital, through which three hundred sick have passed in a single year.

To prepare the Waldenses for conducting the missionary work in Italy, it was considered necessary that their theological college should be removed from La Tour to Florence, and principally through the liberality of a few friends in America, Great Britain, and Ireland, this desirable object was accomplished, by the purchase of the Salviati Palace. The students will, by their residence in the capital of Tuscany, and their missionary excursions into various parts of Italy, acquire such a knowledge of its beautiful language as they could not have obtained in La Tour; and it is gratifying to find that they are not only diligent in their studies, but much encouraged in their early labours. Under the able superintendence of Professor Revel, and the pastor Geymonat, who are also joint ministers of the Waldensian Church of about one hundred and fifty persons, we may anticipate that a great blessing will be conferred on Italy by this school of the prophets.

The deep solicitude with which the Waldensian brethren took this important step will be seen from the statement issued by their committee of

Evangelization, in which they say, "The removal of the School of Theology to *Florence*, great as are its prospects, has also its inconveniences. This consideration will operate, we trust, to rouse us to greater diligence. The number of agents is immediately increased, sufficient to open some new station; and if, as we hope will be the case, openings multiply, our students, formed on the spot, will be sooner qualified to be usefully employed. Our anxiety is not to do all that is to be done, nor to occupy all the posts that may be available, as if we were alone necessary for the evangelization of *Italy*. Our desire is simply to supply to this great work whatever means the Lord may intrust us with for the purpose.

"Further, we hope that our Vaudois youth may derive benefit from the removal of the School of Theology to *Florence*, by the acquisition of a purer language. We feel that we are Italians, and should devote ourselves to the good of *Italy*. But our foreign brethren, whose aid we solicit, must suffer us to remind them that the objects we seek are not those of a terrestrial nationality. They are heavenly; and our Mission belongs to the whole family of the redeemed, and claims their prayers and their help."

It should be observed that the language of the Vaudois is more French than Italian, that the peasantry use a patois of their own, and that the services of the church are conducted in French.

It will be remembered that all the evangelistic operations of Italy date subsequently to the year 1848. To quote the report of the deputation sent out by the Foreign Aid Society: "In 1849 there was no Vaudois parish in Turin, with its church, its ministers, its schools, its hospitals, and its pastors' lodgings; there was no Vaudois 'temple' at Genoa, at Nice, or at Pignerol, nor had the evangelist gone forth from the valleys to carry the Word of God into other towns and villages of Piedmont. A few readers of the Scriptures met in secret at Florence, and here and there an Italian immigrant found at Turin a new religion, of which neither he nor his fathers had ever heard—it was the religion of Jesus Christ as distinguished from the religion of the Pope of Rome. Through the medium of these converts to a reformed Christianity, who, it must be confessed, first received the light from the ancient Church of the Waldenses, a work has begun in Italy which the enfeebled adversary at Rome is unable to arrest."

In twelve years after this date, that is, on the 21st of May, 1861, the Commission of Evangelization presented its report to the synod of the Waldensian Church, in which we are furnished with a general view of its Missions in Italy.

This interesting document first refers to the old stations, in the following order:—

"1. *Pignerol*, where a new church was opened on the 29th of June last year, and two young

ministers ordained. The number of hearers varies from eighty to one hundred and fifty; Sunday-scholars from thirty to forty-five; and the day-school has about twenty pupils. The evangelist stationed here being absent, the preaching is at present carried on by two professors from La Tour, who come down alternately.

" 2. *Turin.*—It has been found necessary to take away one of the ministers, whose presence was required in Central Italy. The remaining pastor, the same who has been there from the commencement, seems to have found out the secret of multiplying his own powers, so as to supply all that has been most needed. During the last month an ex-priest has been on trial as a supply for evangelization. Another ex-priest is schoolmaster. The congregation consists of four hundred persons —one hundred and sixty adults, and one hundred and forty children, all come out of Roman Catholicism, and about one hundred Protestants of different nationalities. About one hundred and fifty to two hundred persons come to the Sunday-school, of whom seventy are children. Altogether the three day-schools have one hundred and twenty-nine children. Besides these institutions, there is at Turin a Bible and tract depôt, a printing-press, an auxiliary committee for evangelization, a provident society, a society to give work to poor women, and a young ladies' society for taking care of children, one hundred and twenty of whom are under

such patronage. All these institutions are in connection with the Vaudois Church.

"Alessandria, Casale, and Voghera, have for a time been left, on account of the scarcity of labourers, but since July one has been placed at Casale, who generally has from forty to fifty hearers, of whom twenty-five are communicants. He always goes to Alessandria, where there always are soldiers glad to hear the Word of God. Besides this, he goes about preaching in the surrounding villages, where there are little knots of people who love to listen to the gospel message.

"3. *Courmayeur* has been a station since 1856. The first awakening there was raised by a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, whose preaching made a great impression, and occasioned a desire for a regular ministry. This little Church has grown up in the midst of struggles and troubles of various sorts, and it has about fifty faithful and persevering members. With grateful emotion we hear of 1000 New Testaments and 500 Bibles being distributed among these simple mountaineers, who, in their turn, evangelize in their neighbourhood, and in their own houses establish family worship.

"4. *Genoa* has two evangelists, schools, and a book depôt; about one hundred communicants, and thirty-five children in the Sunday-school. The girls' day-school has suffered a great loss in the death of its excellent schoolmistress.

"5. *Nice* has during the last year entered on a

new phase in consequence of the annexation. The Church has given itself a constitution of its own. The pastor continues, *pro tem.*, in that office, though he has not broken off his relations with the Commission of Evangelization, having yet many important business matters to settle. The commission faithful to his mandate, and the mission of the Church, receives all brethren, and gives the hand to all who will walk and work cordially with it. It never takes the initiative, or severs them, but it leaves every one at liberty to join or to quit it. This is the position which it holds in regard to Nice. 'We have not called for a separation,' so the commission writes, 'but when the Council of the Church communicated it to us, a little while ago, we recalled to our minds the principle which is the basis of our work of evangelization. Preach Christ to souls who are willing to hear the good news of salvation, and when the moment arrives, leave to those brethren who have been brought to the knowledge of the truth which can save us, the care of constituting themselves as best suits their views and wants.'"

It next embraces incidental and temporary missions:—

"1. The president of the commission was sent as a deputy to the meeting of the Gustavus-Adolphus Society at Ulm, where he was most cordially received.

"2. An evangelist made a preaching tour to

Lyons, Marseilles, Toulon, and other places, where he tried to assemble the Vaudois employed there, and to hold reunions with them.

"3. One of the members of the commission visited Milan, for the purpose of seeing whether it would be desirable to fix an evangelist in that place.

"4. One of the professors of the college at La Tour went, during the vacations, on a preaching Tour to the Vale of Aosta, visited various places; and the results were so encouraging, that the same professor and a neighbouring pastor were requested, by turns, to visit these places once a month, which they have done regularly all the winter.

"5. The evangelist of Pignerol, with the leave of the commission, left his post, which would be otherwise supplied, and went to Naples, where it had been written that a Vaudois evangelist was a desideratum. Finding, however, that at Naples there were already two men engaged in evangelization, he went on to Palermo, where there was not a single labourer, either among Romanists or even Protestants. He has there collected some hearers, who may become the nucleus of a future congregation."

The third part of the Report gives recent stations:—

"According to the circumstances mentioned in the last lines of the preceding section, *Palermo* has been fixed upon as a new station, the evangelist

who is at work there having succeeded in gathering around him a small knot of twenty-five to thirty Sicilians, who regularly attend his ministry, seeking the way of salvation.

"2. At *Aosta* another new station has been opened. For some time nearly one hundred and thirty persons attended, but in consequence of some troubles consequent on the death and burial of a Protestant colporteur, Doro,* the number diminished. These matters being settled, and a place of burial assigned to non-Catholics, the number of persons attending on the evangelical services has again mounted up to eighty in the morning, and in several villages in the neighbourhood there is a good attendance.

"3. The vast field of *Lombardy* could not be left wholly unoccupied, and Milan was naturally fixed upon as a suitable place for an evangelical station. It has now been so for some months. The evangelist who is there employed goes to preach at Bergamo every evening, visits the soldiers at Pavia, and goes once a month to Brescia.

"4. The last-mentioned town, *Brescia*, has also been fixed upon as a station. One of the colporteurs sent out from Turin not only sold a great number of Bibles there, but formed small reunions. A room was hired for the purpose, and about fifty

* He was clandestinely at night thrown into a grave, not only on unhallowed ground, but where only criminals were buried.

people attended regularly. The enmity of the priests raised an uproar against the evangelicals, which even caused the effusion of blood when persons were found suspected of Protestantism. They would have killed the colporteur if they could have got hold of him, but happily they did not. Representations were made to Government, energetic measures were taken, and the said colporteur is now assistant to the evangelist of Milan at this interesting station, which he may be said to have created.

"5. *Leghorn* is one of the most promising of the new stations, the number of auditors being so great that the meeting-room, holding two hundred persons, has been found too small, and a larger one bought. Various are, however, the difficulties thrown in the way of the Vaudois as to using it.

"6. *Pisa* for some time was a very promising station; the number of auditors rose to seventy, but a spirit of dissension unhappily arose, which caused a split in the congregation and the closing of the school. The evangelist will probably be sent to some other field of labour, where his zeal and his love for the salvation of souls can be better appreciated.

"7. *Florence* is naturally the place where the evangelical labourers of Tuscany have a rallying point. All contributes to make it so—the higher cultivation of the people, a more liberal spirit, the enlargement of the mind which is attendant on the

cultivation of the fine arts, sciences, and historical remembrances—all this seemed to prepare the way for the gospel. Two Vaudois evangelists worked there successively during the years 1859 and 1860, but under the pressure of much difficulty. Among those who sought the Lord, there were no less than five different parties, but, happily, such elements as harmonized have united, and the state of things is now more normal. The theological school is closely connected with the missionary station at Florence. The removal of the former, instead of proving—as many of its more timid friends feared—a failure, has already tended to the edification of some. There are six public services in connection with the mission. At Easter there were more than one hundred and fifty hearers, and sixty-five communicants—a Sunday-school with twenty children, and day-schools with about twenty in each. The students have a "Young Men's Christian Association," which is a means of edification, not only to themselves, but to several young Florentines who have become their associates. It rejoiced the hearts of their teachers to find that on giving them a serious exhortation some time ago, the young men came and opened their hearts to them, claiming their counsels and their prayers in regard to the state of their souls. This is mentioned only because it is to be hoped they may be made subjects of prayer.

"*Colportage.*—This special work is not under

the superintendence of the Commission of Evangelization, as such, but some of its members, and also some of its missionaries, have employed colporteurs, either for a short time or for the year round, and all have, with intense interest, watched the blessed work of those humble and effective ministers of the Word. It has been calculated, by one who has been specially occupied with watching the progress of this work, that 50,000 copies of the Bible and the New Testament have been sold during the course of last year. If this sowing is diligently watered by the prayers of God's children, it will certainly, one day or other, bear rich fruits. A most stirring example of the lively interest with which it is looked upon by some of them in other countries, is here detailed. A strong desire was felt by some of the Commission to send one or two colporteurs into Sicily. Two young men from Liguria, already accustomed to the work, were ready to go, but where was the money to come from? Just at that moment of perplexity, a letter came from an old peasant in the south of Sweden. It was as follows:—

"'May the Lord, who has begun in you a good work, be pleased to carry it on, and finish it to the day of Jesus Christ. It is now thirty-five years since I learnt to know the antiquity, the great sufferings, and the innumerable trials of your Church, and now I experience a profound joy in seeing that your Church is a city on the hill, which

throws out its light afar. When, in 1825, a collection was made for your hospital, I could not give much myself, because I was very poor, but I encouraged my friends to do what they could; but to-day, when the Lord has blessed me by giving me more than what is needful for me, Christian charity constrains me to send you these two hundred and eighty-five francs, to aid you in your mission. My very dear Vaudois, my heart is full of tenderness and affection for you, who are the descendants of thousands of Christians, who have suffered martyrdom for the maintenance of the pure gospel. My prayer goes up to the Lord for the success of your work—yes, may the Lord maintain among you pure doctrine and Christian zeal—that sacred deposit preserved among you during so many centuries, in the midst of so many persecutions and sufferings, so much poverty and oppression! May zeal grow up and increase in faith and Christian love among the people of Italy. May the Lord hear this prayer of a feeble Christian friend!—AHE ANDESSON.'

"Two months later the same old man wrote:—

"'Much-loved fathers and brethren,—May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ accomplish your work in faith!

"'After having sent you this summer a sum to the same amount as what I now send you—for the propagation of the gospel among the Roman

Catholics in Italy—I heard that the Bible is received and read with avidity by Romanists, which has put into my heart not to bury the talents which the Lord has given me, but to make them useful, employing them for the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ on the earth, and therefore I send this money to be laid out in purchasing of Bibles to be distributed among your Roman Catholic countrymen—some to be paid for by those who can, others to be given away, or sold at a low price to the poor. Go forward courageously in your work, in the strength of faith, without counting much on material resources; and be convinced that God will provide for the burnt-offering. (Gen. xxii. 8.)

"'Continue to be as salt on the earth in these last corrupt times of the world. May the Lord bless your work, and make it successful!—that is the wish and prayer of the soul and heart of a feeble brother in Jesus Christ.

(Signed) "'OLD PEASANT FROM THE SOUTH OF SWEDEN.'

"With such testimonies of the goodness of the Lord before their eyes, the Commission immediately sent the two colporteurs into Sicily, without concerning themselves about where the money would come from to complete their salaries. They were no sooner sent than a letter came from America, which contained money collected by the

children of a Sunday-school. The children had heard of Garibaldi's expedition into Sicily, and they expressed their wish that colporteurs might be sent into Sicily, to carry the Bible to its inhabitants !"

The difficulties thrown in the way of the Vaudois as to using their place of worship in Leghorn, to which reference is made in the preceding report, call for particular notice, as they show the conflict which has been necessary to secure the actual possession of the rights belonging to United Italy. The history of the Church in Leghorn has been furnished by the pen of the Rev. J. R. M'Dougall, of Florence, in the following interesting letter:—

"The work began through the labours of a Waldensian evangelist in a private house about eighteen months ago. Small and inoffensive as the meeting was, it was summarily put down. The man in whose house the meeting was held lost thereby a good situation, and his wife, an excellent and well-employed modiste, lost all her customers in a single day. This first persecution of the infant church, harsh as it then appeared, was nothing to what has since taken place.

"Driven from a private house, a large hall, capable of containing one hundred and fifty persons, was, with great difficulty, found, and rented from a liberal proprietor, who, though tempted and

threatened in every way, has fortunately continued for a whole year to renew the lease to the evangelicals. This place of worship has been constantly crowded. As the agitation has increased, so has the attendance. Hundreds have, night after night, been unable to obtain admission, while not an inch of standing room inside remained unoccupied. The minister has, however, been subjected to every species of annoyance. The most serious was a tolerably successful attempt at disturbance. Strange to say, several liberal men of note were parties to it, either by their presence or by the participation of a number of their workpeople. This will hardly be believed, and needs explanation. The free city of Leghorn, which, since the time of the Medici, has enjoyed special privileges, was the last spot of ground in Italy on which we could have expected such a drama to be enacted. Within its walls are Jewish synagogues, Greek and Turkish places of worship, English and Scotch churches; in fact, every religious rite is celebrated without let or hindrance. I have heard it jocularly remarked, that Leghorn has more cemeteries belonging to different religious denominations than any other city in the world. But the secret of all the dispeace lies in the fact, that three years ago the Society of St. Vincent de Paul established itself strongly here, in order to check the nascent Protestantism of Tuscany. The members of this Jesuit order have wrought successfully among the middle

classes of the community, and several cafés and druggists' shops are said to serve as rendezvous for consultation and united action. The Leghorn authorities, influenced by the representations of these enemies of liberty, at one time exiled both Mr. Ribet and his most valuable church-member for ten days on twenty-four hours' notice, hoping thus to put down the movement. They also called before them all the known adherents of the cause, and, by menaces and coaxing, so wrought upon weak nerves, as greatly to diminish the attendance for a few weeks.

"At this juncture, a piece of ground in a central locality was purchased, and the shed already erected on it was walled in, so as to form a comfortable church for four hundred persons. A large school-room was also built beside the church. This was felt to be the only outlet from the difficulty. Until the congregation obtained a house of their own, and legal sanction to worship therein, the violent opposition would continue. The thousand obstacles placed in the way of hiring a suitable hall for evangelical service in Leghorn, Pisa, and Florence, rendered it necessary to purchase in Leghorn as well as in Florence, where the large Salviati Palace had been secured for the Vaudois at a cost of £4000. While negotiations were going forward with the Government for a formal recognition of the new church, Baron Ricasoli resigned his high office in Tuscany to take part in the deli-

berations of the Turin Parliament. An interdict was at once served by the bigoted governor of Leghorn, Biscopi, who is both a Piedmontese and a cousin of Cavour, prohibiting the opening of the church on the frivolous pretext that it was too near the Roman Catholic church of San Pietro e San Paolo. As the crow flies, it certainly was not distant more than a hundred yards, but between the doors of the two churches the distance was five hundred yards. I do not believe that such a prohibitory law exists in the statute-book of Tuscany. If it does, Leghorn claims exemption as a free port. But apart from any such law, there was no ground on the merits of the case for an interdict, which only displayed the hostility of the foe. Ricasoli's intervention was not attended to, as he had retired from office. Cavour was applied to repeatedly, and twice at his suggestion did Minghetti forward the permission. Instead of carrying out the Turin order, the Tuscan employés applied to the Vaudois to know if they would not remove Ribet from Leghorn to some other place, for the sake of peace. As this sinister wish could not be complied with, a process was begun against Ribet before the Lucca tribunal, for having spoken against the religion of the State. The process was a mere cover, and will now be allowed to fall to the ground. The deputy for Leghorn in Parliament, Mr. Fabbrizzi, to whom Cavour referred the matter, fought hard to get the Vaudois to give up their central

position, and accept a shabby tenement outside the walls. When this was not consented to, he had the meanness to present to Parliament, with a few recommendatory words of his own, a petition got up by the priests of Leghorn, praying that no Protestant propagand might be tolerated in the town. For this Fabbrizzi was severely blamed in more than one influential newspaper.

"The church will now be opened on Wednesday, 19th inst., without any demonstration, and it is to be hoped that the gospel may have free course and that God may be glorified. The victory is a most important one; for the Church of Rome and bigoted liberals have put forth all their strength and been worsted. The subject is matter of notoriety in Leghorn, and the townspeople entirely sympathize with Mr. Ribet, whom they know to have truth and justice on his side.

"But other circumstances have added importance to this case. Seeing that Protestantism was spreading far and wide, and that every effort to check it was fruitless, the priests during the season of Lent inveighed bitterly against what they termed heresy and Lutheran infidelity. Preaching is very unusual in the Roman Catholic Church, and yet every church in Leghorn has resounded for weeks with the most insulting misrepresentations. An eloquent monk was brought from a distance to the Cathedral pulpit, and a large sum was paid for his services to his convent, in the

expectation that his single arm would destroy the wide-spread influence of heresy. Mr. Ribet attended at the Cathedral and listened to these discourses, and replied each evening in his own church to a crowded and approving auditory. This he continued to do for several months. I had the pleasure of listening to one of his controversial lectures; and a more able, pithy, and effective discussion of a question I never heard in Scotland. The evangelical sermons of this valiant young minister, who established the church at Courmayeur two years ago, despite the intrigues of the Bishop and the threat of the assassin, are equally powerful and impressive. You can easily imagine the interest excited in Leghorn by these clerical philippics and the conclusive replies of Mr. Ribet.

"But the press was set in motion by the priests as well as the pulpit. A series of cheap books (eight have already appeared), written in a popular style and full of all the exploded arguments of the past, was started. These could not remain unanswered. A letter by a Pisan evangelical to the Leghorn preachers during Lent was the beginning of a regular paper-war. At least a dozen pamphlets have appeared. The ablest and most popular of all was a letter addressed by Mr. Ribet to the priests of Leghorn. All of these papers circulated largely, some went through several editions. The last-mentioned has been so popular during the last ten days in Florence, that two new editions of two

thousand copies each have been sold in the streets, along with that remarkable document, the *Colpo di Grazia*, of which twenty-five thousand have been circulated throughout Tuscany in a few days. Mr. Ribet, in his letter, explains quietly the origin and progress of his work, frees himself of groundless charges, sets himself right with the public, and leaves the whole blame of the popular excitement at the door of the priests. As he has been repeatedly and seriously warned that his life was in danger, he has usually been accompanied home after each meeting by a large number of his people, who see him safely housed before leaving. A number of young Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Italians have made a point of escorting him everywhere in the evening, to prevent the execution of silly threats. There was no exaggeration of the danger; for it was reported on the best authority —three of the men calling and informing Ribet in his own house—that sixty men, reckless of all consequences, had banded themselves together to murder him and cast his dead body into the nearest ditch, should the new church be opened. Now that the Government has interfered, let us hope that these factious proceedings will cease, and that the evangelical church, which has been opened in such perilous circumstances, may become a great blessing to Leghorn and its neighbourhood."

According to the intimation in the letter of Mr. M'Dougall, the Leghorn church was opened on

the evening of the 19th of June, when the Waldensian brethren were encouraged by the presence of gospel ministers of other churches. M. Geymonat of Florence began the service by the prayer of Dedication, and M. Ribet preached an admirable sermon from Isaiah, "To the law and to the testimony," etc. This happy termination of a protracted struggle is contemplated with the greatest satisfaction and gratitude, because it affords a new and great opening for evangelical work in Leghorn. It indicates the line which Ricasoli, the successor of Cavour, is prepared to take in his administration, and the decision with which he intends to carry out his views; and is a fresh triumph in the great cause of religious liberty in Italy. With a free constitution and a preached gospel, this noble country and noble people may yet be a praise and glory in the earth.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ITALIAN FREE CHURCHES.

WITHIN the last fifteen years there have grown up, in various parts of Italy, numerous converts from Popery, whose ecclesiastic position it has been somewhat difficult to define. They complain of the attempt to identify them with any of our religious communities, and stand far apart from the church whose labours in Italy we have just noticed. It is their great excellence that they have the most profound veneration for the Word of God, the most simple faith in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord, a holy love one to another, and a meek, quiet, and unworldly spirit. That they are thoroughly emancipated from Popery, its dogmas and ritual, is fully admitted by all who know them, among whom some regard them as having proceeded to undue lengths, while there is at present but little reason for expecting that they will be absorbed into any existing Protestant church.

It must be confessed, and the confession is made with pain, that there has been some degree of severity in speaking of their refusal to conform to the model of other Christian bodies separated

from the Romish Church; and this opportunity may be embraced for expressing the hope that all Christian love may be extended to them, and earnest prayer made in their behalf, although they continue to speak of themselves only as the brethren, or as now designated by Professor Mazzarella, the "Evangelical Church of Italy."

To Mr. Henry Dunn, who made a tour through Sardinia, Lombardy, Tuscany, the Papal States, and Naples, in the years 1857-8, and who had frequent intercourse with these brethren, we are indebted for much valuable information respecting them, not the less valuable because it is furnished "in the hope that it might be the means of exciting sympathy in favour of the many poor Italians who are now endeavouring, in the midst of much persecution, to promote the kingdom of the Redeemer in their native country." This gentleman, whose letters first appeared in the "Christian Times," and were republished as "The Gospel in Italy," gives the result of his own observation of these brethren, and his frequent intercourse with them. He speaks of them under the designation of Free Churches, as "those who during the last ten years have in various parts of Italy embraced the Protestant faith, and formed themselves into communities for mutual instruction and worship."

They are described as to their social position. They "are nearly all poor peasants, day-labourers, mechanics, small shopkeepers, or servants. With

and profanation. They acknowledge that the Church is the assembly of brethren in Christ, inasmuch as they follow and practise the teaching of the Redeemer, having as their word of salvation, instruction, and consolation, the Bible, and the Spirit of God for their guide. (Gal. v. 16—23.) We have not the anti-evangelical notion of the Church that it must be a national establishment, a work of theology, a result of the business of ages. The Church is the work of God. Its forms are simple, pure, and distinct from those of the world. It should be a family of children of God, who meet together for edification, to worship God in spirit and in truth, and bear testimony to the grace they have received by purity of life and by works of charity, whether in the bosom of the family, or in their native land, or among all mankind. We do not allow that the Church can be composed of nominal Christians who find their names inscribed in a parochial register, and who are persuaded of that which is altogether different to Christ's religion: for them there should be an evangelization. But as long as they believe not and act not as believers in Jesus, they ought to belong to anything rather than to the Church of Christ."

Of churches and the ministry he thus speaks:—"Since, according to the gospel, we find in different countries churches independent of each other, but joined together by bonds of love and united by the doctrine of the apostles, so ought it to be now;

for the word and the order which God once gave to the Church cannot change, and he who seeks to change them opens a door to abuses, to tyranny, and to usurpations. The meetings of brethren ought to be made for mutual edification and in simplicity (1 Cor. xiv. 26), observing the order and discipline prescribed in the gospel. For that end there is a ministry, but it is only a service rendered to the Church. Every minister is a servant, who has neither privilege nor post of honour. He is acknowledged to be such by the gifts he has received of God, and which he has long exercised and clearly manifested in the midst of his brethren. He will edify his brethren with expositions of the Bible, with exhortations, with prayers. He will know how to help and comfort the sick, strengthen the weak, console the afflicted, and, if he is an Evangelist, he will announce to those who are not Christians grace and peace in Christ Jesus. But between the evangelical ministry and official clergy, Catholic or Protestant, there is a gulf. The evangelical ministry is essentially lay, fraternal, simple. It does not consist in any degree whatever in *caste;* it has no fixed salaries; and it ought only to be maintained by the brethren in the proportion of its evangelical instruction, without having any peculiar rights. [He speaks here of civil rights.] Out of the Church, and within the State, the evangelical minister is a citizen, like other men. He has neither power, nor honours,

nor pay. He exercises the profession which he has, and, instead of asking the State for protecting laws for himself or for the Church to which he belongs, he will obey all laws which wound not the dictates of a man's conscience towards God. And, finally, like every Christian, he will apply to himself what the Apostle Paul said (Phil. iv. 8, 9), and thus he will not oppose progress, but will promote it in everything that is of good report.

"Observe, that I admit the existence of the Church. I acknowledge the institution of a ministry proceeding from God, and recognized as such by the Church. We have ministers recognized by us as such, and those who preach the gospel have been first approved, recognized, and then sent as such by the Church. Last April (1857) three of them were condemned by the tribunal of Alessandria, and in the judgment delivered they were designated as ministers—*Servitori della 'Chiesa di Christo.'*"

The deputation from whose report these extracts are selected, append the following judicious and appropriate commentary to this exposition of Free Churchism in Italy:—"Men like these, having come out of the Church of Rome, and many of them escaped as out of the fire, with strong convictions of the great truths of the gospel, and so capable of expressing them, cannot be forbid 'to cast out devils,' though they follow not with us. If we view them in their zeal for the truth, in their

capabilities of exposing the deadly errors of a religion with which they have been familiar, we see in them men who have been called 'to prepare the way of the Lord' in Italy; and, like those who were scattered abroad in early times, to go and preach the Word everywhere. If we view them as men experienced in matters of Church order and discipline, as these are understood in National Churches, and by those who maintain that a moderate hierarchy is of apostolic origin, we no longer consider them, in their present unorganized condition, as competent judges of these matters. In all the Churches of our Reformed Christianity, there is an acknowledged standing ministry; that is, of those who are chosen out of the congregation, and set apart for the exercise of the same by prayer and the laying on of hands; who preach the gospel, and who, therefore, 'ought to live of the gospel;' who alone have authority to administer Christ's sacraments, and are ambassadors for Christ, and at the same time servants of the Church, for Christ's sake. It is, however, obvious that the elements of an evangelization for Italy are found in the Italian converts; and, although your deputation could not acknowledge this agency as the best for Italy, they still find in it an agency which has been blessed and owned of God. It does not present itself yet in a form for a Society to deal with, which has necessarily its rules and regulations; but it may be recommended to the indivi-

dual support of persons who desire to promote the cause of the gospel in Italy."

We are furnished with several valuable testimonials as to the manner in which the Italian brethren conduct their religious meetings.

Colonel Tronchin, of Geneva, thus describes a meeting in Genoa, at which he was present:—"It was held in the usual meeting-place, situated in a small street in the humble part of the town. It consisted of two large rooms, there being openings made in the wall, so that the speakers might be distinctly heard in both rooms. From fifty to sixty were assembled, with the Bible in their hands. They took one or two chapters, which they read verse by verse, men, women, and children. Mazzarella explained the words they were not able to understand, and then went over the chapter, explaining paragraph by paragraph, questioning his auditors, who replied spontaneously, with simplicity and precision, often supporting their answers by texts of Scripture. What a motley group presented itself before me! There were young women and young girls, in their pretty white veils, and others dressed like ladies; but the majority consisted of men, several of them military, amongst whom I observed a good-looking sergeant-major, taking, with great earnestness, his turn in reading the verses; also mechanics, dark-complexioned porters and sailors. Excepting three Tuscans, one Roman, one Venetian, three Lombards, and two Neapoli-

tans, all belonged to the population of Genoa or Piedmont. The evening service lasted two hours; and I assure you, that in the various churches I have visited in France, I have never seen anything to equal the earnestness and intelligence of this congregation. I truly enjoyed hearing the word of grace so clearly and fully announced, and was much edified by the numerous and fervent prayers offered up by members of the congregation."

The Deputation from the Foreign Aid Society attended one of these meetings in Turin, over which Dr. De Sanctis presided, when they tell us:—

"The service consisted of prayer and singing of hymns and an exposition of Scripture. The portion expounded was taken in course (Revelation, part of the 13th and 14th chapters), into which enters 'the mystic number of the beast.' The explanation was out of the common line of exposition, and showed great power in handling a difficult subject. To us it appeared to be above the capacity of the audience, which consisted of about twenty-five persons, apparently of the humblest classes; but we were told, on making the remark, that the people desired to have those expositions. They were accompanied by earnest appeals and much practical application; and the force with which the expounder delivered his sentiments, made us the more regret that he had not a larger sphere for his zeal and powers. The small body in attend-

ance on a week-day night was not a criterion of their numbers. On a Sunday as many as seventy or eighty persons attend."

In Genoa, they say:—

"Signor Mazzarella accompanied us, and at seven o'clock had assembled together about thirty of his brethren in the hired room where those evangelical Christians usually meet for edification. The rooms might admit, on an emergency, about one hundred and twenty persons. The number usually assembled on a Lord's-day, we understood to be seventy or eighty. Two or three times a-week a certain number of them meet in a Bible-class. A chapter is read, or some portion of it, each in turn reading a verse, and taking part in commenting upon the passage. We joined them in this devotional exercise. It was the third chapter of Philippians. Signor Magrini appeared to preside. Mazzarella took his place as one of the audience. The remarks made upon the verses as they followed in order showed a clear perception of the word of truth. The righteousness of Christ (ver. 9), which is by faith, was rightly distinguished from the righteousness of the Law; and the power of the resurrection, after being made conformable to the death of Christ, was dwelt upon with more than ordinary discernment. Occasionally one of the humblest and apparently least instructed offered a remark, which was listened to with respect and attention; and it afforded us much gratification to

hear strangers, whom we had never seen or heard of before, give utterance to the same views of Scripture which *we* had been taught to hold; so that it might have been said, 'We write (or speak) none other things unto you than what ye read or acknowledge.'"

The first visit of the Deputation was paid in the autumn of 1857. Two years later, two members of that body again visited Genoa, on behalf of the Foreign Aid Society, and thus speak of "an increasing congregation of evangelical Christians, edified and built up in the faith by Signor Mazzarella and his colleagues;" adding that "perhaps in no city of Italy has the gospel taken deeper root than in Genoa." They say—

"It is from the congregation of this free Italian Church that the most zealous and able evangelists have gone forth; and, avoiding all comparisons where the elements and the mode of using them are different, we should say that Genoa has, up to this time, been the principal city from whence have been separated some of the most energetic men 'who have gone forth to the work' in Italy. The Scriptures are introduced into Genoa without the least hindrance, and there is no obstacle to their circulation. Genoa will naturally become a centre of evangelization, where there may be permanent depôts for Bibles and religious tracts; and, in the course of time, besides the regularly-formed Church of the Waldenses, an Italian school for the forma-

tion of Scripture-readers and evangelists for the Riviera and Central Italy may be organized. We bade farewell to Mazzarella in the afternoon of the day of our arrival with a view of attending the meeting of the Italian Christians at Alessandria the same evening. It is refreshing to be greeted, on arriving at an Italian city, by men of whom we may at once 'take knowledge that they have been with Jesus.' Three of those brethren expressed their joy on seeing us arrive among them to offer a word of exhortation. About forty persons met at eight o'clock, according to their usual practice, for reading the Scriptures and for prayer. We had here an opportunity of witnessing the mode in which those meetings of the Italians who adopt the lay system are conducted. Nothing was altered on account of the presence of two strangers. A hymn is sung, and a prayer is offered up by one of the assembly, and then the portion of Scripture in course is read round, verse by verse. Comments are then made upon it by a few of the most instructed, and the whole is conducted upon the principle of equality among Christians, no one being appointed especially to minister. We could not but observe, however, that this system of equality and no minister, issues in bringing to the surface some one or two more gifted or better instructed than the rest, to whom all look as their guides; and the authority of such a one generally becomes more absolute among his fellows than it

would be if he had his place appointed in an organized church. The small companies of Italians who adopt this social plan of meeting together for mutual instruction are neither united under any directing committee, nor yet with one another; and it does not appear to us, that in such a system of independence these brethren can make any great impression upon the great body of the Italian people. They rather meet to edify one another, than to spread the influence of the gospel abroad; but they have their place in the present state of Italy, and the very system which individualizes them makes each one in his limited sphere to shine as a light in a dark place. Alessandria has seen its days of little jealousies among Christians. It was at first a field occupied both by the Waldensian agents and the free Italians; the latter are now in greater prominence."

Mr. Dunn gives the following account of what he witnessed in Turin and Alessandria:—

"We gladly united with the Italians in what they term 'breaking of bread,' which corresponds to what is called in the Church of England 'taking the Sacrament.' The service was held in the room where they usually meet. Dr. De Sanctis presided. He occupied, in all respects, the position of an English Independent minister—first addressing the communicants, and then passing the 'elements' to the brother nearest to him, who, after partaking, handed them to his neighbour.

All partook of the bread and wine sitting in their accustomed places. Two of the brethren prayed, and two others gave out the hymns that were sung. Again the service was simple, quiet, and devout. To call such an assembly disorderly (except in an ecclesiastical sense), would be an unpardonable calumny.

"At Alessandria, we found that the brethren, besides assembling three times on the Lord's-day, met *every evening* for worship or instruction. We happened to be there on a Thursday, and on expressing a wish to be present at one of their week-day services, were told that on Sundays the room was crowded, sometimes the townspeople attending in such numbers that it was impossible to obtain standing-room; but that on week-nights comparatively few came, the members of the church being almost exclusively labourers (chiefly masons and gardeners), working from five in the morning till seven in the evening, and, consequently, too weary to attend regularly."

Sheriff Jameson, who, in behalf of the Edinburgh Bible Society, visited Northern and Central Italy, in 1860, attended one of these meetings at Alessandria, where he found above fifty persons present, of whom several were females. He states that "the worship was conducted in the method usually followed by the Presbyterian and Independent Churches of this country and of the continent." He adds—"There is, however, no recognized pas-

tor, although it is said M. Rosetti practically fills that office. He and two of the brethren gave very excellent addresses on the passage of the Bible that was read. The tone of all was entirely evangelical." The singing both at the Sunday-school and at the meeting is described as "very beautiful, and in the national style."

Referring to the meetings in Florence, conducted by Mazzarella in the winter of 1859, Mr. Jameson says—"They were so crowded that the timid Government became alarmed that the priest party might make it the occasion of some popular tumults, and therefore closed them."

To these interesting testimonials might be added several of a more private character, but equally interesting, by Christian friends from this country, who have frequently met the Italian brethren, and joined in their worship, from among which the following cannot but prove acceptable. Mrs. R——, of W——, in a letter to the author, says:—

"I had the privilege of worshipping with the Italian Christians on several occasions, and I was delighted with the simplicity of their plans, as well as with their earnest attention to the Word of God, and the deep interest exhibited in their countenances. Whilst we were in Genoa, in May, Gavazzi passed through, on his way to England. On the Sunday evening he preached, instead of De Sanctis, a most powerful gospel sermon, which

completely enchained the attention of his numerous and enthusiastic hearers.

"One of the most striking characteristics of the Italians, who have left the Church of Rome, is their constant appeal and implicit deference, 'to the law and to the testimony.'

"When the pure gospel has been for some time preached in Italy, and the Word of God still more extensively circulated, no doubt some form of Church organization will naturally arise, distinct, perhaps, from any now in existence, but suited to the needs and to the genius of the Italian nation."

The two leading men in the Italian Church are Professor Mazzarella and Dr. De Sanctis. Of the former, who, next to Gavazzi, takes his place as "the ablest and most eloquent preacher of the gospel in Italian in the present day," the following interesting sketch is given in the pages of "Evangelical Christendom:"—

"Bonaventura Mazzarella, Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Bologna, and Member of the Italian Parliament, was formerly an advocate in the kingdom of Naples. Condemned to death on account of his liberal tendencies in 1848, he escaped to Corfu, where he earned his livelihood by giving lessons in classics and mathematics. In 1851 he went to Turin. Poverty and misfortune had produced in his mind infidelity, and hatred against every kind of religion and divine worship. Thus he entered into the

newly-opened Church of the Vaudois at Turin (1852), for the purpose of using any weak arguments in the preaching of the pastor in a book against Christianity, which he was about to publish. He came again and again to the Church. The struggle caused in his soul by the preaching of the gospel produced a violent brain fever, and, after his recovery, he called on the pastor, whose sermons had so deeply impressed him. After a few months he became his friend and coadjutor in instructing the young, in visiting the sick, and even in preaching, to which, though a layman, he was admitted on account of his wonderful eloquence; his livelihood he gained as clerk in a small business. When the cholera broke out in Genoa, in 1854, he appeared in the meanest cottages of the sick and dying as a helping angel; he prayed with them, rubbed their cold limbs, held them in his arms in the agony of death; he covered the sick with his coat, or gave them his own shirt, for the purpose of changing the linen of the sick. Some misunderstanding separated him from the Vaudois, whose church was then less attended than his own Bible and prayer-meetings. His ministering to the Italian Churches at Genoa, Alexandria, and Asti is well known to the friends of the gospel. A very able book, a critique on science, attracted King Victor Emmanuel's attention, who appointed him, 1860, Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Bologna. Here are notes of his first

lecture, communicated to us by a friend, who was present when he delivered it. He treated of two questions: 1. Are you (the Italians) in a condition to render the study of morals as possible as it is necessary? 2. What preparation is necessary to attain to the study of the moral sciences? Upon the first question he said: '1. It is of the first importance that liberty should be enjoyed, in order to make researches into morality. In slavery the government or the priest is everything. It is impossible to discover one's duties with freedom. Power and superstition are everything. Italy is now free in a great measure; therefore, the study of morals ought to be pursued in Italy, for, without morality, there can be no lasting liberty. 2. In order to be able to understand the science of duty, one must have suffered: it is by the sorrow caused by one's faults that the importance of morality is discovered. Italy has suffered much; she is, therefore, in a good condition for studying and comprehending moral science. 3. Another condition is activity. For the idle there is neither morality nor possibility of moral studies. Italy is active now. She no longer slumbers. She is, consequently, in one of the best conditions for the study of the moral sciences. 4. Another condition is to have a future in prospect. He who is shut up in the present has no morality, and is not fitted for moral studies. Italy has a future; she, therefore, ought to study morality, otherwise she

will fail in her object.' Upon the second question he said: '1. That confidence should be felt in one's personality as a moral being. 2. Duty must be earnestly loved. 3. There must be a candid mind and a right heart. 4. One must be accustomed to think for one's self, without prejudice and superstition.' He concluded by showing the importance of duty for men, and, in particular, for the Italians."

At the recent general conference of evangelical Christians in Geneva, Professor Mazzarella delivered the following important address to the assembly, in a style which enabled all who heard him to account for his power when addressing his countrymen. This admirable address shows the spirit which animates the free churches, and proves that without conformity to other communities they are influenced by the loving spirit of true Christianity:—

"Those who know the history of evangelization in the world, know that when the work has commenced it is not to be judged by the number of converts, but by the reasons for which they have been influenced. The number will increase as time is given. The reasons of the conversion—this is the principal question. The present number of converts in Italy is not extraordinary, but the gospel has been preached with earnestness; this is that which inspires us with confidence.

"Italy does not forget, as M. Meille has said, that she has twice given civilization to the world, but the Italians require to be reminded that they ought to receive Jesus Christ, because their history has been in the past one of great sin.

"Political changes have opened the way. Jesus Christ will enter. This is why Italian missionaries should lay aside every foreign occupation. Christians have need to forget what it has been, to understand the state of the Italian conscience, such as it is.

"We know that God has never forgotten us. The Vaudois have always held up in Italy the flag of the gospel. Their concurrence ought to be accepted. I can say before God that, since I have been a Christian, I have seen in the Vaudois of the valleys only brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"But in Italy, what is the state of the consciences of the people? What will you place in opposition to their Saint Peter's, their ceremonies, their history? They will say, 'We have a temple more beautiful than all others; a history more glorious than that of all other nations.' We shall put in opposition that which they have not—the gospel. We shall say to the Italians, 'Do not ask what we are, or what our fathers have been. We carry to you the gospel. See what Jesus Christ has done for you, eighteen centuries ago. It is that alone which can elevate the conscience in the midst of in-

terests and terrestrial passions. You have need of that alone. The Italians come to us with prejudices. It is necessary, therefore, to present to them Him who is truly the Saviour. By Him is salvation to be obtained, and not by any particular form of Protestantism. History does not cure consciences. It is Jesus Christ alone.

"If we preach Jesus, He will Himself do a great work in Italy, and, after a few generations, it will be seen in all its breadth. It will be seen that all the Italians, the Vaudois of the valleys and others, are agreed. History will not furnish elements of division. The Vaudois proclaim the same Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ we find ourselves in union with them, and we can work together in the same work. We ought to ask of God that his Spirit may penetrate our hearts to the core.

"In the midst of the Italians there are divisions, but we must shut our eyes to that which is denied, as well as to what is affirmed. Some say that we are Darbyists. No! we admit the ministry since it was instituted by Jesus Christ. We admit a settled ministry; it is the institution of God; nor must we reject study, and rest satisfied in ignorance. We say that the minister of God ought to study, but that he should have the especial call of the Holy Ghost. Without this, with all his studies, he would only be a littérateur or a pedant, but no minister of the Lord Jesus. We are then as one with you. The accusations made

against us do not come from the Vaudois of the valleys, but from strangers and ignorant persons.

"Of what has Italy need? It has need of the gospel, and of missionaries. I belong to the Evangelical Church of Italy, but I respect other denominations of churches. Each has its own cause of separate existence. It is sufficient that they confess Jesus, as Son of God and Redeemer of sinful men.

"We must have in Italy evangelists and schoolmasters. The Vaudois Church has done well in this relation, but we must all do as much. How are we to prepare evangelists? Those who are converted manifest, without doubt, a gift suitable. Let them be proved, that their sincerity may be tested. It is not necessary that these evangelists should know history; they ought to study the Bible. At the end of this study, they might become evangelists or schoolmasters, as best fitted.

"Do not believe that I limit to the need of such agents all the wants of the Italians. I wish also that they may ask of God to send them missionaries, and to give them all that is necessary for the organization of our Church. I hope that you will no more believe in the difference that has been said to exist between us and the Vaudois Church. We have need to love and to sustain one another. God will enable us to agree. This is the most ardent of my supplications."

It will be seen, from this address, that the spirit of the excellent professor is full of pure Christian affection towards his Vaudois brethren. Instead of regarding them as unwelcome intruders, he says, with satisfaction, that "the Vaudois have always held up in Italy the flag of the gospel," that "their co-operation ought to be accepted;" adding, "I can say, before God, that since I have been a Christian, I have seen in the Vaudois of the valleys only brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ." Is it possible to express Christian sympathy and union in stronger language than that employed by Mazzarella, when he says, "all the Italians, the Vaudois of the valleys and others, are agreed. History will not furnish elements of division. The Vaudois proclaim the same Jesus Christ. In Jesus we find ourselves in union with them, and we can work together in the same work."

Mazzarella should be allowed to speak for himself and his brethren as to their ecclesiastical position. They who have not submitted to an incorporation with any of our Protestant Churches, whether Established or Dissenting, protest against being classed with the Plymouth Brethren. Without discussing the merits of this system, it is quite enough to know it is ignored by the Italian converts, and when the application to them of this designation is known to be offensive, ought we not to respect their wishes, and avoid its further use? Says Mazzarella, "Some say we are Darbyites.

No!" And the reason for the disclaimer is most important, as it puts to rest the controversy as to the views of the Italian brethren relative to the Christian ministry. Can we wish for more scriptural views of the office and qualifications of the gospel minister than Mazzarella has recently given? —"We admit a settled ministry; it is the institution of God; nor must we reject study and rest satisfied in ignorance. We say that the minister of the gospel ought to study, but that he should have the special call of the Holy Ghost. Without this, with all his studies, he would be a littérateur or a pedant, but no minister of the Lord Jesus. We are then as one with you" (the Vaudois).

Dr. De Sanctis, of Genoa, was for a long time a priest of Santa Maria Maddalena, in Rome. The study of the Sacred Word discovered to him the errors of his Church, from which he seceded, to enter that of the Waldenses. From conscientious motives, and for the purpose of enjoying greater freedom of action, he, after a few years, left the Waldensian Church and identified himself with the Christian Brethren. He is correctly described as a "man of sound and extensive acquirements, eminently skilled in the management of the Roman Catholic controversy, and every way qualified to impart a superior education to any who may be engaged in services which require it."

Dr. De Sanctis has, until recently, had a small

congregation in Turin, and his excellent lady a day-school of about fifty children, and a Sunday-school of about one hundred. The cause of evangelical truth in Italy is greatly assisted by the pen of Dr. De Sanctis, whose extensive learning is laid under contribution to meet the wants of his country. In one of his latest works, "Si può leggere la Bibbia," *The Right to Read the Bible*, the arguments of Popish writers are ably discussed and refuted; it is shown that the Protestant Bible is neither mutilated nor falsified; that the Fathers of the Church, for the first twelve centuries, recommend the reading of the Word of God; that the Popes have prohibited its perusal by the laity, only because it condemns the doctrines and practices of their Church. The mass and purgatory are among the numerous topics which this useful writer has treated with great ability, and their publication by the Italian Committee at Geneva renders the most valuable service to the cause of truth.

His "Lettera a Pio IX.," "La Tradizione," "Il celebato dei preti," "Il primato del Papa," "La Confessione," and "Dialoghetti," all directed against the errors of Popery, and admirably adapted to their object, are very widely circulated among his countrymen, by whom they are read with avidity. He is now preparing an important controversial work on the Mass.

"L' Amico di Casa" is the most popular of the works produced by this industrious writer. It is

an Italian almanack, well furnished with all the information that can be required in such a publication, while it is made the medium of conveying the great lessons of heavenly wisdom. In 1860 the issue was 26,000 copies, and the number for 1861 not less than 40,000.

After the departure of Signor Mazzarella for Bologna, De Sanctis went to Genoa to supply his place.

We need be at no loss as to the principles of this excellent man in reference to theology and church government, as he has furnished us with explicit statements respecting them.

When Dr. De Sanctis formed a church in Turin he issued a declaration of faith and discipline, in which he gave a creed corresponding in all essential points with the doctrinal Articles of the Church of England and the Assembly's Catechisms. After describing the members of the Church as "all those who believe, and who are called in the Word of God by the name of saints, elect, sons of God, who walk not according to flesh and blood, but according to the Spirit," he thus speaks of the Christian ministry:—

"12. Besides this priesthood common to all believers, the Church recognizes a special ministry, instituted by God himself as his Church, for the perfecting of the saints and for the edifying of the body of Christ, which ministry is manifested to the Church by the gifts which God bestows

upon individuals chosen by Himself. The Evangelical Church at Turin has consequently elders and deacons.

"13. The elders—called also in the New Testament presbyters and bishops—are distinguished among themselves, and are counted distinct by the Church, according to the distinction of the gifts of God, and not for any hierarchical distinction.

"14. The elders must be chosen by the Church, which, after many prayers, laying aside all human considerations, shall choose those who have given indubitable proof of having received the gift of the ministry from God, and of possessing the requisites demanded by the Word.

"15. The Church, knowing from the Word of God, that, in the apostolic times offices were conferred by the laying on of hands, retain this custom, declaring, however, that not the imposition of hands, but the gift of God confers the ministry."

Referring again to the preaching elders, the Declaration says: "17. The Church . . . . must highly esteem and love them for their work's sake; obey them, provide as far as possible for their maintenance, and hold them in honour; look upon them, in short, as ministers of Christ, destined by the Holy Spirit to feed the Church of God."

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY LIFE OF GAVAZZI.

ALESSANDRO GAVAZZI, the man who is pre-eminently qualified to promote the knowledge of the gospel in Italy, and whose previous history has secured the enthusiastic admiration of his compatriots, deserves special mention in connection with the work which the Lord is performing in that land.

His learning, his unstained moral reputation, his known superiority to all sordid and mercenary motives, his distinguished patriotism, and his unrivalled eloquence, have secured for him an extraordinary amount of popular favour throughout Italy; while his skill as a controversialist, his earnestness as a preacher of the gospel, and his ardent love to Christ and the souls of men encourage the expectation that his evangelistic labours will prove eminently useful to his country.

Born in 1809, in Bologna, where his father was a judge and professor of law in the University, he became a monk of the Barnabite order at the age of fifteen, and a professor of rhetoric in Naples at twenty, and afterwards of *belles-lettres* at Leg-

horn, and a distinguished preacher at twenty-four, in which capacity he continued for the next seventeen years. During these years, although he severely denounced the corruptions of the Papal court, he was a firm and unscrupulous believer in all the dogmas of the Romish Church.

For eight years his voice was heard throughout Piedmont by admiring crowds; and when he was driven out before the envy and jealousy of the Jesuits, he continued his labours for four years in Parma, where he preached several times a day. It is said, that in his fifteen years' preaching, he delivered no less than four thousand sermons to all classes, from King Charles Albert down to the vilest criminals in the jails. To avert the rejection of these statements on the score of impossibility, it may be well to refer to the statement of Mr. J. W. King, to whose "Biography,"* and that of Nicolini, the author acknowledges his obligations for this portion of his volume: "The Roman Catholics have what they call spiritual retreats, exercises, and missions, varying from three to twenty days, in which three and even five sermons are preached daily, by as many priests. Gavazzi was never permitted to divide his work with others, but had to do it all himself."

In the course of his studies, Gavazzi found in the history of his country a glorious past, which furnished him with more instructive and genial

* Published by Bennett. 1860.

subjects than the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and the ordinary topics of Popish sermons; but when he began to discourse on these genial subjects, and to speak of the degradation of his country, he was silenced by the Pope for a time. He soon found other fields of labour in Parma, where he was appointed chaplain-general of the prisons, whose condition he laboured to improve.

The order of Barnabites, to which he belonged, needed all the support it could obtain from the preaching of this eloquent brother, and through its influence he was sent to preach in Perugia, where we read that his popularity rose to a *furore*, as he introduced a revolution in Italian preaching, by making history the basis of his orations, and heartily denouncing the evils of his time. This measure of freedom could not be tolerated, and the preacher was sent for eighteen months to a convent of his order in San Severino.

While Gavazzi was in this convent, Gregory XVI. was succeeded by Pius IX., whom he, as well as ourselves, regarded as a truthful and earnest man, and in whose praise he rapidly produced a volume of poetry, prose, and inscriptions, which he not only wrote but printed with little assistance. This luxurious volume, beautifully bound, and emblazoned with the Pope's arms, he presented to one of the Pope's brothers, through whom it passed into the hands of the Pope, who received it very graciously. It was arranged that,

for the occasion, Gavazzi should be relieved from the ban of silence, that he might deliver an oration in the cathedral of Sinigaglia in praise of the Pope, the hospitality of whose younger brother, Count Mastai, he then enjoyed. Such was the admiration of Gavazzi for the reforming Pope, and the eloquence of his panegyric, that the garlanded church echoed in praise of the orator, to the no small scandal of the bishop and priests. Was it not now that the Italians began to regard the preacher as the patriot through whose labours they might indulge the hope of deliverance from the evils under which they were suffering.

A few days after this oration, the preacher had an interview with the Pope, when he first discovered that the glorious visions in which he indulged were delusive. Thus we read of this interview and its effect:—"It was on that occasion that Pius IX., not permitting him to kneel and kiss his toe, as prescribed, but giving him his piscatorial ring to kiss, and smiling, said, among many other things, 'Well, Father Gavazzi, is it true that they have been applauding you in a church?' and he was about to read him a lecture, when the sharp-witted Barnabite answered, 'Not on my account, holy father, but on your own.' The Pope laughed heartily, and thus the subject dropped. During that half hour, an ominous curtain fell over all the bright dreams of Gavazzi. In his enthusiasm for Italian regeneration, while dis-

closing the popular hopes, at the word Italy, the Pope imperiously commanded him never to speak of Italy again; but, smoothing his austerity, dismissed him with kindly assurances. Let us for a moment imagine the effect which that audience must have had upon one who was looking for such glad tidings for his native land. He left the Quirinal with the sure conviction that there was (there) no great Italian reformer, but a fanciful comedian. All the great men who had audiences of the Pontiff during that time, left his presence with similar convictions."

After the atrocities committed by the Austrians in Padua, when the Roman youth assembled in the University church to pray for the souls of their slaughtered brethren, Gavazzi was unanimously called to address the assembly, and being carried to the pulpit in the arms of the students, gave an address so pathetic and moving, that the audience was excited almost to a state of delirium. The orator had previously been placed by Pius IX. under the ban of silence, and for this offence was condemned to the convent of Polveria. While in this confinement, five thousand visitors' cards told the wily Pope the state of public feeling as to the captive, who soon, by the Pope's contrivance, regained his liberty.

Next we find the priest-patriot addressing fifty thousand of his countrymen in the Colosseum, and proving the principal author of the expedition

against the Austrians, and, as the preacher of this crusade, styled Peter the Hermit of Italy. Appointed by the Pope the chief military chaplain, he goes forth with the tricoloured cross, determined to win back his country from the invader. The courage, the self-denial of Gavazzi in this crusade won the admiration of the whole army, of which he was the life and soul, and which must have been victorious but for the treachery of the Pope, who, by a secret treaty, had sold his country to Austria.

The pen of the most eloquent historian would find a worthy theme in the heroic struggles of Gavazzi from this period until he was compelled to abandon his country, and fly to England. More like romance than reality were his exertions to supply the wants of the sick and wounded; the power of his eloquence, as he frequently harangued tens of thousands in favour of their country's cause; the exposure of his life when trying to rescue others—as at Treviso, where the bullets were flying around him when he was carrying a wounded man to the waggon, heedless of the fraternal voices that cried out "Alessandro, do not expose yourself!—go behind that tree;" the preservation of his charmed life when, in the retreat from Treviso, cannon-balls struck down the two captains with whom he was flying before the Austrian cavalry; his powerful but fruitless attempts to revive the courage of the army, and prevent a dastardly return to Rome and Naples, leaving

Venice and Lombardy in the grasp of Austria; the eloquence with which he denounced and frustrated the attempt to get up a republic; the insults and scoffing he endured from the Austrian soldiery, and the Croats, who pointed their bayonets at his breast, as he marched with his compatriots out of Vicenza, which he had bravely assisted to defend; his marvellous *escapades* from the snares of Pius IX., who sought to reward all his patriotism by imprisonment, and kept up this persecution until his own miserable flight from Rome; the horrible discoveries he made of the crimes that had been perpetrated in the cells of the Inquisition; his valour in holding out against the bayonets of France when he was found now facing death in the thickest of the fray, and anon beside the wounded and the dying, administering all the consolation he could impart; and, finally, his marvellous flight from the city to which his *quondam* friend and now bitter foe, Pope Pius IX., was again restored.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROCEEDINGS OF GAVAZZI FROM HIS RETURN TO ITALY IN 1859, UNTIL HIS VISIT TO ENGLAND IN 1861.

AFTER an absence of ten years from his beloved Italy, Signor Gavazzi had the gratification of finding that the time had arrived when he could revisit the scenes of his patriotic labours, and take his share in the great work of evangelization. During his protracted sojourn in England, his mind had been gradually emancipated from Romish errors, and brought into the pure light of the gospel. No longer was he satisfied to deny the temporal sovereignty of the Pope, he had now ceased to regard him as in any sense a minister of Jesus. The dogmas of Popery had been renounced in succession, until he had become an humble disciple of Christ, looking to Him alone for justification, and maintaining the sufficiency of the Sacred Scriptures as the sole rule of faith and practice.

The Barnarbite priest had now become a Bible Christian, who had laid aside every badge of Popery, for the open Bible, which he wore as the expression of his determination as a private Chris-

tian, and a teacher of Christianity, to make the inspired Word of God the only light to his path. Those who had the privilege of knowing the political exile when first he sought an asylum in England, of watching the progress of his emancipation from the errors of Romanism, and acquiring the knowledge of the gospel, witnessed in his history, a new illustration of the truth that "the path of the just is as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day."

The great doctrine of Paul the Apostle, and of Luther the Reformer, had now taken full possession of the mind of Gavazzi, and furnished him with the most powerful instrument for the work of reformation in Italy. This characteristic truth of the gospel, which is denied in all Romish teaching, and condemned by the Council of Trent, has always furnished the most effective means of dealing a blow at the root of the Romish system; and wherever it is clearly perceived and boldly maintained, all Romish and Romeward delusions are doomed to a speedy overthrow.

The following extract from the sermons of Gavazzi, preached in London in 1855, will show how clearly he now understood the cardinal doctrine of Christianity:—

"We are saved by faith, and by the will of God, not by our own works. The fundamental principle of our religion is justification by faith and grace. We are not justified by our works.

How can we be justified without faith in Christ? If good works are necessary to save, then the sacrifice of Christ was not complete, but a farther sacrifice is necessary; which is direct contradiction to the words of Scripture—'By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.' Good works are the consequence of faith; it is the faith which saves. In order to obtain remission of sin, it is only necessary to have faith in Christ, and to ask forgiveness of Christ, and not of the priests. No need for the teaching of the Pope, or the dogmas of the Church; all that is necessary for the poor blind Roman Catholic to believe is found in the gospel."

Having first visited his family, and especially his mother, in Bologna, Gavazzi went into Tuscany, where he did not deem it expedient by preaching to agitate the public mind, or afford the reactionists an excuse for opposing the great constitutional change then in progress. It was of vital importance that nothing should interfere with the vote the Tuscans were about to give for the annexation of their country to Sardinia. No sooner was the Grand Duchy incorporated with the new Italian kingdom, than Gavazzi and his friends were satisfied that he might, by openly denouncing Popish error, claim for Tuscany the liberty of publicly protesting against Romish superstition, and presenting the doctrines of the gospel.

The Rev. W. Arthur, in his excellent work, "Italy in Transition," referring to this period, appears to have attributed to the Government the imposition of that silence which should be rather ascribed to the discretion of Gavazzi. He says:—

"Not only did the interim Tuscan Government permit the exclusion of the Bible, but it permitted several acts of coquetting with the liberty of the congregations in the town; and when Gavazzi arrived, expecting that in a free country he could stand up and preach, he was held under restraint, not thrown into prison or driven away, as he would have been at Naples or Rome, but as effectually debarred from lifting up his voice in public."

After King Victor Emmanuel had visited his new subjects in Florence, and by his presence and declarations satisfied the Tuscans that they had really secured the national advantages for which they had struggled, Gavazzi entered publicly on his evangelistic labours. The new rights achieved by the people, and confirmed by their popular sovereign, were to be asserted. Accommodation was obtained in a house near the prefecture of police, and three rooms were not found large enough for the crowds that sought admission. Here the gospel was preached, and the errors of Romanism unsparingly refuted twice on the Sunday, and twice during the week, in presence of the large numbers who were packed in the different apartments, and on the stairs, many being unable

to see the preacher, but all thankful to hear his voice.

The question of religious liberty, the right of the preacher to proclaim, and of the people to hear the doctrines of the Reformation were now fairly tested. A deputation was sent to the prefect of police to protest against this method of assaulting the domain of Romish priestcraft; but its reception was such as to afford little encouragement for future appeal. It was a new thing for the prefect on such an occasion to acknowledge that his power to interfere had ceased. The deputation was informed that it would be unconstitutional to attempt to put Gavazzi down, and dismissed with the unwelcome intimation that it would be useless again to tempt him to exceed the duties of his office. These important gatherings were kept up for two months, when Gavazzi was obliged to leave and meet Garibaldi in Sicily.

Palermo furnished a most encouraging proof that there are to be found among the Sicilian priests those whose minds are opening to the doctrines of the gospel, and making their way out of the mists of Popish superstition. There were several friars who sought interviews with Gavazzi in Palermo, and heard from him the history of his own spiritual emancipation, and of whom he speaks as having "in their hearts abandoned Rome."

The meeting of Gavazzi with Garibaldi took place in Melasso, and was on both sides of the

most cordial description. The preacher recognized in Garibaldi the man whose extraordinary prowess had been employed under God to render him the deliverer of Italy from secular tyranny; while he in his turn greeted the servant of the Lord whose work it was to labour for spiritual freedom. "Your arrival," said Garibaldi, "is an omen to me that all will be right." The expectations excited by the arrival of Gavazzi were not disappointed. The soldiers enjoyed the advantage of his eloquent appeals, which served to impress them with the moral grandeur of their enterprise, while the benevolent spirit of the gospel found an efficient organization in the Commissione Filanthropica, by which the sufferings of the sick and wounded were greatly relieved. By means of this benevolent arrangement, many comforts were administered to the bodies and souls of the suffering, who were furnished with excellent religious instruction, and most carefully read the New Testament and pious books that had been provided for their use.

At the urgent request of Garibaldi, the preacher frequently addressed the crowds who congregated to listen to his appeals. In Messina, he had the opportunity to deliver more than twenty addresses in the Gran Piazza; his topics on these occasions being selected with admirable prudence. The congregated multitudes were urged to union in the pursuit of their national independence, to

avoid the republicanism which too many were disposed to regard as the only alternative to tyranny, and their thoughts were directed to those higher objects which ought to crown all the temporal advantages they hoped to secure. Especially in these addresses he preached Christ, whose gospel was the proclamation of true freedom, and to whom his auditors were indebted for the liberty they then enjoyed.

In Catania, the Athens of Sicily, Gavazzi was treated with the highest honour. The aristocracy, headed by the Marquis Giuliano, went out to welcome his arrival, and received him with the most cordial hospitality. Here he remained four days, and delivered four discourses on the state and prospects of Sicily, in which also he seized the opportunity of speaking on the highest subjects. He was compelled to resist the appeals to prolong his stay and visit Syracuse, and on his departure was accompanied for five miles on his journey by a large party of ardent admirers, who occupied fifteen or sixteen carriages. Referring to this occasion, Gavazzi says, in a letter to a friend: "At Catania I was asked to celebrate the festival of St. Agatha, the patron saint of the city, but, instead of this, I directed the people to go no longer to the servant, but to the master, Jesus. In due time Sicily will receive the gospel. In spite of numberless superstitions I have been able to discern the seeds of hope." At Aci Reale, which he reached at mid-

night, he was obliged to decline the pressing invitations of friends, who wished him to remain until the next morning that they might hear him lecture, having to hasten to the scene of conflict in Calabria.

In Reggio, immediately after the expulsion of the royal army, he preached twice in the Piazza to vast audiences, who received him with the utmost enthusiasm.

Naples was now on the eve of the final struggle with the army of Francis II. Here, Gavazzi rejoined Garibaldi, and had frequent opportunities of addressing great crowds on the Piazza Reale, as well as in Castellamare and Torre dell' Annunziata. While haranguing the people in favour of the annexation of Naples to Sardinia, the orator was faithful to the higher objects of his mission, and did not fail to show how political emancipation should lead on to the enjoyment of a purer religious faith.

Several of the addresses delivered by the eloquent patriot on these exciting occasions to the Neapolitans, have been preserved, and are worthy of being reproduced in this country, although it is now a year since they were addressed to the enthusiastic crowds in the Piazza dell' San Francesco di Paolo, the square of Palazzo Reale, and one of them—that "For the election of the king" (Victor Emmanuel)—in the Church del Carmine.

A few extracts from these admirable orations will show how wisely the Christian orator seized

the opportunities afforded him while discussing great political questions, to say all that the occasion permitted in favour of the Word of God and the gospel of his grace. It was of the utmost importance that the man who had identified himself with his compatriots in their struggle for political freedom, should retain their confidence and their enthusiastic admiration, in order that he might secure their attention for those higher and divine themes on which he had to discourse, and which are the only subjects on which he is now anxious to address them. Every one will see how unwise it would have been on his part to relax his mighty grasp on the affections and gratitude of the people, who saw in him the most powerful advocate of their rights as men, and in all the discourses he had delivered to the excited multitudes it was of vital importance that he should participate in struggles in which he had shared in adverse times, and were now ending in a glorious triumph.

Each oration uttered in these interesting circumstances shows that the Italian patriot formed a correct estimate of the influence which had been accumulating during his public life; it shows also that he was duly sensible of his responsibility to use it faithfully as a Christian in the service of his heavenly Master, and for the spiritual emancipation of his country. The quotations now given from his "Predica," in the Church del Carmine will best illustrate that union of prudence and Christian

fidelity by which all these discourses are distinguished:—

"After—after—there is a renovation, so to say, of the moral organization—the kingdom of Victor Emmanuel means justice to all, impartiality in the eye of the law; no more exceptional tribunals; and, above all, no more the anomaly and the shame of ecclesiastical tribunals, because it is the same here as it is to-day in Piedmont, Lombardy, Tuscany, and in Emilia—if a priest, or friar, bishop, or even a cardinal, commits a crime, or an offence against the law, he must be punished for that crime and offence the same as if he were a carpenter or shoemaker, a fisherman or a fish-dealer. There cannot be partiality in the face of the law; therefore, the criminal tribunals and the tribunals of bishops and archbishops must disappear, because they were an insult to the administration of justice. Hitherto, according to your criminal code, if a priest committed a crime, he was condemned privately, and, by privilege, he received a degree of penalty less than a layman, so that whilst a layman was condemned to be hung for assassination, a priest, for the same mischief, was only condemned to jail. Do you see what injustice! A priest committing a crime should be condemned to double the penalty of a layman, because a layman may be ignorant, low, and full of passions, and therefore, in some sense, excusable; but a priest—a priest, who is the minister of God—a priest, who is supposed to be

educated—a priest, who explains the gospel, who celebrates the mass, and says that he has every day in hand, and to take every day in his mouth, the body and the blood of Christ! A priest should be holy; and, therefore, if a priest commits a crime, or an offence, he is twice as much guilty as a layman, and should be doubly punished. And yet, by the past code, and under the ecclesiastical tribunal, he was punished with more moderation and indulgence. The kingdom of Victor Emmanuel, thanks to God, causes this disparity to disappear, and everybody is equal in the face of the law!"

This important address thus concludes:—

"People of Mercato, let us not forget at the end of my speech, as we have not forgotten it at the commencement, that we are in the principal church of the Mercato; therefore, I ask the prayer of your hearts! Brethren, brethren! before Christ who hears us from heaven! Brethren, before Jesus who is our Father, and who will one day be our Judge! Brethren, let us lift up one prayer only!

"Christ [the people repeat the words of the prayer], let the affliction of this kingdom of Naples cease! Christ, give us grace that we may forgive our enemies, who have done us so much evil, especially from 1848 to this year, 1860! Jesus Christ, bless the king, whom we will elect with our votes next Sunday. Preserve him as thou givest him to us; let him continue to be a firm, loyal patriot, Italian, and honest king; and we shall esteem him,

we shall obey him as the legitimate representative of thy goodness and mercy.

"Lastly, Christ, who hast redeemed us from Satan and from death; who hast restored us to the liberty of the sons of God; Christ, bless us. Oh! Christ God! Christ Father! bless our good Garibaldi, who was the first to get our salvation, the first to break our chains; the first to open a way to Victor Emmanuel; the first to render it possible for us, at no distant day, to obtain the total unity of Italy! Oh! bless him in peace and bless him in war! Bless him in the council of the government, and bless him in the strategy of the battle-field; and let him, without the shedding of much blood, in this very week, as a sacrifice, as a pledge of the arrival of their legitimate king, Victor Emmanuel, with thy help, with thy guidance, with thine arm, and under thy shield, conquer this Capua, which is the last shelter of despots and tyranny."

We must give yet another extract, the exordium to the fifth oration, which was delivered in the Piazza di S. Francesco di Paola:—

"Italy is dead! Our enemies said it, Italy is dead; and as far as they could they have tried to kill her indeed! Italy is indeed the land of the dead! And they our enemies have done all they could to let her become the land of the dead! But Italy does not die, because she cannot die! Italy, which from a forced, and not a natural death, has risen twice, giving twice civilization to the entire world.

Italy did only seem to sleep the sleep of death. She was buried in a sepulchre: The priest-king had sung her obsequies, and given her the last absolution. The soldiers (sbirri) of the Bourbon, together with those of the Croat, were guarding the sepulchre that no one should come near it. They build around her a kind of cemetery, and they called it—the order and peace of the restoration. The spies of the despots were even trying to find out the thoughts and the sentiments of such as came near the sepulchre of the common mother. If the mother is dead, said they, can her sons ever see her a queen on the throne?

"But Italy does not die; she only seemed to die, waiting its moment of the resurrection. She thought she heard the sound of the trumpet echoing from Varese, Palestro, and San Martino, it gave her a galvanic shock. But the Angel of God said to her, 'Wait, it is not yet time!' When, however, the vile attempts of Villafranca to extinguish Italy proved abortive, then it was that a man came to the sepulchre; he came alone, clothed with its most austere virtue of ancient Rome, and said to her—'Mother, I am thy Garibaldi; do not fear of me! Mother, it is time to rise! there is the sword of the Brutus and the Cesars! Mother, arise! And Italy arose as a giant—(*loud applause*)—to die? For Italy now, it is as impossible as for the sky of Naples to become the night of Chaos, as for Italian hearts to become the inhabitants of

Hell. No! Italy will die no more! She has risen at last, she has risen for Garibaldi. She has risen for the revolution. Diplomacy, politics, victims, treachery, perjury, will no more kill her! We will have no more of the despotism of the Bourbons, of the Lorenzi, of Austria, of Pope-Kings." (*Cries of adhesion.*)

The following graphic description of Gavazzi, and of his discourse in the square of the Palazzo Reale, in Naples, is furnished by the pen of an eye-witness:—"Gavazzi preached again last night to an audience of certainly not less than eight thousand persons, including a large number of priests, some wearing the liberal badge, a red cross, on their cassocks. It was a striking scene. A rostrum, of course, covered with red, white, and green, some eight yards long—for an Italian preacher or orator requires space—was erected in the Largo (Square) del Palazzo Reale, between the two equestrian statues of the Bourbons of past days, Charles III. and Francis I. In front of the façade of the splendid church, which another of the family dedicated *ex voto* to St. Francesca di Paula; and on either hand and at the rear were palaces, where formerly dwelt other descendants of St. Louis.

"Those who may remember Gavazzi about London, and can recall the closely-shaven face, short hair, and plain black suit, would be puzzled to recognize him again, with long black beard and

moustache, and a stained and faded red shirt and wide-awake, pouring out for one hour such a flood of eloquence. His manner is perhaps too theatrical for the English taste, but admirably adapted to catch the Neapolitan ear, and his language, illustrated as it is by those wonderful signs which almost spare the people of Naples the trouble of speaking, is the perfection of popular oratory.

"The text of his lay sermon was this: 'Without self-sacrifice you cannot form a country.' He said the Bourbons had debased the people till from the highest they had become the lowest in the social scale; that they had destroyed all liberty, all happiness, all religion; that they had turned a paradise to an 'inferno.' Garibaldi had come and had said, 'Let there be liberty,' as God had said, 'Let there be light,' and there was liberty. Then he suddenly changed, and with a comic vein worthy of San Carlino, he bade adieu to Bombicella, who had gone to Gaeta, where he is resting until he is ready for the little journey to Madrid or Vienna. 'A little journey, yes—*ma senza ritorno.*' He preached for more than an hour, and his audience, the most impatient in the world, listened in rapt attention.

"We may say of the Padre as Augustus said of Demosthenes, that 'he was a perfect orator, who loved his country sincerely.' He preached to-day in the Marinella, the head-quarters of the lazzaroni. In reference to this subject, Gavazzi

himself remarks in a private letter, 'I thank God from my heart for my resolution to come hither, for by my public addresses in the piazzas I have gained the hearts of the people, who seem to love me more than a brother, and thus a door is open for future evangelizing. I can see that when Italy shall be free and united, my duty will be to revisit all those parts which I am now traversing with the liberating army. I am satisfied with my present mission, since instead of speaking either of saints or of the Madonna, I have had opportunity everywhere of recommending the Italians to invoke the Divine Saviour alone. Already in this country, so madly devoted to the Virgin, I have been enabled openly to declare the Lord Jesus as the only Saviour, Mediator, Consoler, Pardoner, Refuge, and Hope."

CHAPTER IX.

VISIT OF GAVAZZI TO ENGLAND IN 1861.

When Gavazzi returned to England in the spring of the present year (1861) he was most cordially welcomed by his friends, who were desirous to learn the history of his labours in his beloved Italy, the plan of his future operations, and how they might most effectually afford to him their cordial co-operation. It should be mentioned to his great honour that the liberality of Christians in this country has never been solicited for his own support, for which he has always sufficiently provided by his popular lectures. It is his object to make the gospel "without charge" to his own countrymen, and to leave them no ground for the suspicion that he shares in the mercenary views of the Italian priesthood. The prudence of this course is sufficiently obvious, from the sad effect produced on the minds of Italians by the covetous spirit of the Romish clergy. It is a painful fact that many of the Italian inquirers after the truth, and converts to its profession, fail to distinguish between the priesthood of Rome and the legitimate ministry of the gospel. This is illustrated in a remarkable

manner by Mr. Dunn, in his "Gospel in Italy," who says: "To the Italian of the nineteenth century, the Church, whether Papal or Protestant, is simply *una bottéga*, a shop; religion, in whatever form it may be, *negozio*, a craft, or trade; ministers of whatever denomination, *ipócriti*, "hypocrites who devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers." The appeal he makes to the liberality of Christians in this country is simply for the purpose of conducting those important works which he regards as best calculated to meet the religious wants of Italy at this important crisis, and for which his own personal and unassisted labours are not sufficient.

Soon after his arrival in London, a committee was formed, under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury, for the purpose of assisting him to accomplish the important objects which brought him to this country. Those objects are briefly set forth in the following paper drawn up by himself:—

"The object of my short visit to England is entirely religious, and in direct connection with the mission with which it pleased God to favour me. Italy, having obtained constitutional liberty under King Victor Emmanuel (a wish I always expressed in my former lectures), is now to be initiated to the blessing of the gospel's liberty. For this purpose I am asking the support of British Christians to the effect:—

"1. To open a large chapel, for the present, in Naples, and afterwards in Rome.

"2. To provide the means for preparing future evangelizers; several priests being already desirous to work in the evangelization of their country.

"3. To obtain a good supply of books, specially Commentaries on the Bible, and the best books on the Romish and Neologian Controversies, for the use of the future evangelizers while under training.

"4. To establish a printing-office, for the purpose of publishing a daily evangelical paper and our religious tracts, independently of foreign printing.

"5. To receive any gifts of maps, engravings, charts of all kinds, for our infant schools, which are to be established wherever a mission shall be formed.

"6. To recommend personally our Italian work to the prayers of British Christians, that it may prosper in faith and love, to the spreading of the kingdom of our dear Jesus, and to the best glory of God; my only wish and aim being to see the pure gospel of God preached and obeyed in Italy, to please the heart of Jesus in the salvation of souls.

"ALEX. GAVAZZI.

"London, June, 1861."

These gentlemen had the satisfaction of learning that an association had been previously formed in Naples to aid the work of the Reformation in Italy, in harmony with which Gavazzi has been

pursuing his labours. The appeal of the committee, issued from Naples, will be read with deep interest, showing, as it does, that Gavazzi will not confine himself to Southern Italy, but labour for the benefit of the whole of the Italian Peninsula.

"Naples, April, 1861.

"THE SOCIETY IN AID OF RELIGIOUS REFORMATION IN SOUTHERN ITALY.

"This Society, considering that the present time is very favourable for the expansion of evangelical truth, and for the foundation of a great Christian work in Naples, proposes to collect pecuniary subscriptions from Christians of all communions, who would associate themselves with such objects.

"PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY.—The purpose is not so much to direct, as *to aid* the evangelical Italians (who have already begun to work in preaching the gospel and in the distribution or sale of the Bible), and who aim at the establishment of schools, refuges, or other institutions, based upon biblical teaching.

"OBJECTS.—To maintain two preachers, who have for some time drawn together hearers impressed with and desirous for the truth, and to prepare more for the new places of worship to be established.

"To hire halls as places of worship, and apart-

ments for boarding-schools, and perhaps elementary schools.

"To pay the masters who are appointed to instruct in these institutions, under the immediate surveillance of some one in our confidence.

"To cause to be translated and printed some good controversial and practical works.

"Such are the numerous ends which the Society proposes to itself, and which it will follow according to the measure of the resources which may be given to it. At present, funds are wanted *much more* than men.

"*It is the evidence of the need* of helping these Christians, who have hitherto, owing to their isolation, been without the power to spread the light of the gospel, 'notwithstanding their good-will,' which has made it a duty to us to associate for the undertaking of this difficult task. We are confident that God will help us. We hope that He will put into the hearts of our brethren in Christ a generous desire to contribute, by gifts of all sorts, to the religious instruction of a country till lately closed against the gospel."

Before giving its sanction to the appeal about to be made in this country, the London Committee prudently determined to ask of Gavazzi such a statement respecting his own faith and purposes as would justify the recommendation they wished to give. The republication of the short correspond-

ence thus occasioned, is important, as it will always serve the purpose of showing that due precautions were taken on the part of the Committee, while it will enable their friend to speak for himself.

"88, Newman Street, Oxford Street,
"May 31, 1861.

"MY REV. DEAR THOMAS,—The letter you ask from me now was by my will published some five or six years ago in the Life of Gavazzi, author, Mr. John W. King; so that you can refer to it all kinds of inquirers, with the assurance that to the confession there made, there is now its application to our work done in Italy. May it not be forgotten, the great truth of the gospel (the only charitable and Christian measure of men), 'Ye shall know them by their fruits.'

"If I was still entangled in the Popish cobwebs, I would not have applied to you for sympathy and support, but to Wiseman, or even to the Pope. This is logical. I should be very glad to know that there is a man who, more than myself, has denounced and fought *Popery in all its errors*, or whatever to me is anything like Popery.

"May Jesus Christ be glorified in each and all of us, and in all our doings!

"Believe me, yours sincerely,
"ALESSANDRO GAVAZZI.

"Rev. M. Thomas."

When it was discovered that the book referred

to in the preceding letter was out of print for the present, Signor Gavazzi wrote a second letter, as follows :—

"May 31, 1861.

"DEAR AND REV. THOMAS,—It ought to be known, as you know it, that my only wish is to see the gospel of God so spread through all Italy, as to increase the kingdom of our dear Jesus, and to obtain the salvation of as many souls as shall believe in Him, and work in His love. I never had any other aim since I became a Christian; and, under the blessing of God, this will be always my work.

"Believe me, yours sincerely,

"ALESSANDRO GAVAZZI."

Since the receipt of the foregoing letters, a copy of Signor Gavazzi's Biography has been found, and the following is an extract of the letter to which he refers :—

"My plan is simple, and my views are simple also. I purpose to attack Rome with the Aristotelic weapon called *a removendo;* that is to say, to remove, one after the other, all the errors of Papal Rome, as to call forth the necessity to receive back the truth of Apostolic Rome. And it must be so. There was a Christianity in Rome before there was any Catholicity; and previous to the Rome of the fiery Hildebrand, there was the Rome of the Apostle Paul. *It is to that Primitive, Apostolic,*

and Evangelic Christian Church that I anxiously look for a return, to obtain which I will work all my life without relaxation.

"Let nobody interfere with this mode of evangelizing my Italy. The work is noble, and worthy of Christian bravery. To bring it about will be a difficult and perilous task. Many and strong are the enemy: their craft, their malice, their power, unbounded and unscrupulous. But if it be God's work, He will bless it, and be with the messengers who carry the good tidings to the Italians. Nor did I become a Christian to be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus, or afraid to preach Christ and his faith among the bitterest opponents. Let it not be asked, then, any more what I was, or what I am not, but let every one know that I am an unsectarian, independent, evangelical Christian. 'So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to *them* that are at Rome also.' I ask my friends to pray 'God that giveth the increase' to bless the will and the work of his labourers, among whom I hope by his grace you will always find your sincere friend,

"ALESSANDRO GAVAZZI."

A few days after this satisfactory correspondence, a large meeting was held in St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, to welcome the Christian orator whose voice had so often been heard denouncing the errors of Romanism, and exposing the designs of its lead-

ers in reference to England. His appearance on the platform called forth the warmest expressions of applause, and must have convinced him that the respect and admiration of his friends in England had not abated during his absence.

We preserve an epitome of his eloquent address, which cannot fail to interest the Christian public, furnishing, as it does, the most gratifying proof of his own religious progress, while it indicates his views as to the work he and his fellow-labourers have to accomplish in Italy:—

"He said it had pleased his committee to describe his mission as 'the Reformation of Religion in Italy.' They did that out of courtesy, and with a view, no doubt, not to hurt the feelings of his Italians. But he was rather of another opinion. He saw no hope or possibility of any reformation of religion in Italy. A thing that had some good in it might be made better, but Romanism in Italy had nothing good in it, and could not be reformed. It must be destroyed. (Cheers.) He was really a Protestant, but not in name; because they must not protest against Romanism in Italy. They must destroy it. (Cheers.) There was to be no compromise between Jesus Christ and the pure gospel. He was for the evangelization—the regeneration of Italy. (Cheers.) He hoped the Italians would be, by the grace of God, so disposed to receive the truth of God, as in Jesus, as to throw off Romanism altogether. Romanism was

unreformable. Rome had seven sacraments. We had two. But we had to reform not the number, but the character of the sacraments. Baptism did not regenerate the individual. Faith in Jesus Christ did. The Eucharist was a pretence that the bread was the body and blood, soul and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was a heresy. This could not be reformed; it must be destroyed. (Cheers.) The religious movement in Italy was a great enterprise. Every thinking man in Italy wished to see the end of the present disgusting state of things. He was glad, however, to find that superstition in Italy was not so rooted and fanatical as it was in Ireland. (Hear, hear.) The errors in Italy were chiefly imported from Germany. (Hear, hear.) The duty of Protestants now was to fight and evangelize. Their enemy was a sort of Austrian eagle—a double-headed animal. (Laughter.) They had to fight against Romanism and despotism. They had to fight for political as well as religious liberty. Political liberty was necessary, for, if that were obtained, religious liberty would probably follow. Italy was a Roman Catholic country, and must be dealt with as such. Victor Emmanuel was obliged to deal with it as such. Till 1859 the Inquisition guarded the Church of Rome—now that institution had lost its power, but the Popish priests still kept a watchful eye over the evangelizers. The Pope had honoured them with a great display of consistorial fireworks.

(Laughter.) The Pope was alarmed, and uttered curses as long as his own tail. (Laughter.) Popishly, fatherly, he accused us of being persecutors, and believed what Savanarola said of Rome some centuries ago. What a kind and generous father! The spreading of Protestantism in Italy was spreading alarm among the Romanists. A certain Roman priest lately wrote a book on the 'Rule of Faith.' The book, thank God, was so large, that it was not read. (Laughter.) The Protestant rule of faith, derived from the Bible, was short, and would be read, and would prevail. The Roman faith, they said, was the faith of their fathers. What did they mean by their fathers? The Council of Trent? Why not go further back? —why not go behind the period of Constantine? There they would find the faith of our ancestors—pure Christianity. (Cheers.) He had preached at Naples, and there he found Romish priests very fond of fighting. Bigoted priests, who, blindly believing what they preached, were ready to fight for it. They were prejudiced, but still consistent. However, the light of the gospel would soon overcome them. Then, in Naples, there were pamphleteers who opposed the truth. When he preached at Naples, he showed the absurdity of St. Anthony preaching to the fishes. Why not preach to pigs and asses, as well as to fishes? (Hear, hear.) Then came the question of the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary. Some were

strong upon the virginity, but most of them contended for her beauty. An orthodox picture must not represent her as an old woman. She must be beautiful. Where was the use of a Virgin Mary if she were not beautiful? These pamphleteers came out with their patristic learning, but they did not know the Bible. Councils, fathers, and bulls of Popes could not destroy the light of the sun by a tallow candle, neither could quotations from the fathers overpower a quotation from the Bible. This was what the evangelizers had to fight against in Italy. But they also had to fight against rationalism in Italy. Italian rationalism sprang from the Church. English rationalism sprung from our going away from the Church. Their rationalism arose from their having no Bible; ours from going away from the Bible. Romanism was the parent of infidelity in Italy; Puseyism was the parent of it in this country. The University of Oxford was now trying to substitute human for divine authority, so did the German neologists. (Hear, hear.) And the result had been that Oxford, which once burned the martyrs who testified of the Bible, now would burn the Bible, which testified of Jesus Christ. (Cheers.) This was a double holocaust. (Hear, hear.) About this rationalism, after a close examination, he must say that two-thirds of the population in Italy were infidels. Of the middle classes, four-fifths were infidels, and of the country people one-fifth were infidels. The greater part of

the Italians were deists. Some either denied the Holy Scriptures altogether, or denied the best parts —the most essential doctrines of the Bible. The Italians were infidels; yet they called themselves Roman Catholics, and insisted that they were Roman Catholics, and insisted that they would not change their religion although they had no religion to change. (Cheers.) When he (Gavazzi) was doing his duty, Garibaldi being at Naples, the moment he preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified, they said he was a Protestant, and he had no more friends in Naples. (Cheers.) That showed the prejudices in the Neapolitan provinces against Protestantism, and that justified his course in not joining any particular Protestant denomination. When asked what he was, he could say he was not a Protestant, neither was he a Roman Catholic, but an Evangelical Christian of the Church of the Apostle Paul. (Cheers.) There were many evangelical churches in Italy, yet his best hopes were in Naples. The Neapolitans in religious matters were bigoted and ignorant, but in other respects they were the most intelligent portion of Italy. If they were taken out of the dust, they would be the greatest people in Italy. The Neapolitans were to the rest of Italy what an Irishman was to an Englishman. (Cheers.) The Irishman, like the Neapolitan, was religiously low. Get him out of that difficulty, and he would be a superior man. Let the same be done with the Neapolitan, let the

light of the gospel be diffused there, and it would shine over all Italy. You would have it like a volcano blazing all over the peninsula. (Cheers.) His hopes were in Naples. (Cheers.) He intended soon to return to Caprera, to be at the disposal of Garibaldi. And here he would take this opportunity of reminding them of what he said five years ago, that he always stood for the union of Italy, with Rome as the metropolis, under the sceptre of Victor Emmanuel. (Cheers.) The union under the king—that miracle of continental kings, that kept his word to his people—would be a great success. The government of Emmanuel had done much for the priests, but they behaved like the snake in the fable, who bit the man that reanimated it by warming it in his bosom. (Hear.) The Protestants could not act with such ingratitude. They had no conspiracies nor confessionals in which to concoct them. They were loyal men. (Hear, hear.) He told the Italian Government not to be afraid of Protestantism. He told them not to be afraid of his teaching. He ran all the risk, and would abide the consequences. (Hear, hear.) Our future was bright and encouraging. He was looming about Rome! He had an idea that before 1861 was over, he would be preaching in the Colosseum. (Cheers.) He did not anticipate a row with France, but he was sure that if he stepped into Rome, somebody else would have to go out. (Laughter.) If he went in by the port

St. Juan, the Pope would go out at some other quarter. Where would he go? Some said to Jerusalem, some said to Jericho, but he (Gavazzi) did not care where the Pope went, provided he left Rome, and allowed him (Gavazzi) to go in. (Cheers.) He had gone back to Italy as a sort of John Bull. (Laughter.) The English had done much by non-intervention to serve the Italians. He trusted England would maintain this system of non-intervention. All Italy wanted Rome as their metropolis. The Romans sent a petition to Paris requesting the Emperor not to interfere in this movement. If he (Gavazzi) went to Rome, there was an end of the temporal power of the Pope. And if he lost the temporal power, in a few years he would lose his spiritual power. Spaniards, Portuguese, Chilians, Irish, and others wished the Pope to be in Rome—he did not. John Bull preferred roast beef to toads and snails, and the Italians preferred Victor Emmanuel to the Pope. The Italians had as good a right to their choice as John Bull to his roast beef. (Cheers.) The independence of Italy must be proclaimed from the Capitol. (Cheers.) And there must be a Church of St. Paul in Rome. (Cheers.) He had strong doubts whether St. Peter ever was in Rome. The Epistle of Paul to the Romans would not coincide with the Council of Trent. Justification by faith without works, as taught by Paul, would not coincide with justification by works, as taught by

the Council of Trent. Paul's justification by grace would stare the justification by works of the Council of Trent out of countenance. (Cheers.) Well, then, he was desirous of having a church in Italy that would stand by the Bible, and the atonement and self-sufficiency of Jesus Christ.—(Hear, hear.) Having complimented Garibaldi for the facilities which he afforded him (Signor Gavazzi) to preach the gospel in Naples, the reverend gentleman concluded amid loud cheers."

Among those who heard this admirable address was Sir Robert Peel, who in the same hall had about a fortnight previously stood forward as the advocate of religious liberty in Spain. He had accompanied Matamoros to his prison in Grenada, and afterwards visited him in his loathsome dungeon, and resolved to plead in his favour with the Governments of Spain and England. To his great honour he has carried out his resolution with the utmost energy, though unhappily with little success.

It was most gratifying, a few evenings later, at a private meeting of influential gentlemen, convened for promoting religious freedom in Spain, to witness the meeting of the Italian patriot and the English senator, and to mark their perfect agreement on the great question which, having long been satisfactorily settled in England, has just triumphed in Italy, and is now conflicting with the priestly powers of Spain.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE METHODS OF OPERATION PROPOSED BY GAVAZZI.

THE plan which Gavazzi proposes to follow in his future operations, must awaken the deepest interest among all who are anxious that the Saviour's kingdom should be extended in Italy. We must desire, and we cannot too earnestly pray that the influence possessed by this remarkable man may be employed in a manner calculated not only to lead to immediate good results, but to lay the foundation of a great work for future ages. He is "a bright and shining light," in which many are willing to rejoice for a season, but it would be a subject for deep lamentation, if that light were extinguished before it had enkindled others which might continue to shine for ages to come.

It is therefore most gratifying to find that the gifted man who seems worthy of being regarded as the Luther of Italy, has seen the necessity of laying the foundation of various institutions which by the divine blessing may prove the meaus of great good to his country in the future. The plans to which we have previously referred have

already elicited the approval of those who are best qualified to judge of their value, and during the recent visit of Gavazzi, he obtained a measure of support which it may be hoped will be greatly increased as his designs are more extensively known and considered.

There can be but one opinion as to the qualification of this distinguished orator to preach that gospel which he has learned, and exalt before his countrymen that Saviour whom he loves. Nothing can be better than his purpose to traverse the whole Italian peninsula, that all his countrymen, who are so anxious to hear him, should from his lips hear that gospel which the Apostle Paul preached and wrote to the Romans.

A highly intelligent lady, who has had opportunities of observing the effect of Gavazzi's preaching to his countrymen, and collecting opinions respecting him, says that, "wherever he speaks in public, enthusiastic crowds eagerly drink in his words, while the most judicious Italian Christians think that he is raised up by God for doing a great work in his native land, and that he is the man for giving a mighty blow to the Papacy." May he realize his fond wish and hope to preach the gospel of Christ in the Colosseum! A more delightful and encouraging spectacle it would be difficult to imagine, than a crowd of earnest listeners gathered around the Christian orator, as he exalts the Saviour where now ignorant monks

lift up the crucifix, and preaches the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

By means of that system of railway communication, which is now developing in Italy, it will be in the power of such a man as Gavazzi to carry the gospel into every part of that country, and in various circuits, to appear, after short intervals, in the chief cities before the multitudes congregated to hear him.

It is not enough, however, that one such evangelist should for a time be heard by the crowds who may congregate. The preaching of Whitefield and Wesley in our country a century ago, led to the erection of large chapels where they and other men of similar energy might be statedly heard proclaiming the gospel. It may be hoped that Gavazzi will soon find himself surrounded by other faithful servants of the Lord Jesus, who have abandoned the errors of the Romish Church, and to whom he may be able to say, as the great apostle said to Timothy, "The things that thou hast heard of me, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

One of the most hopeful facts connected with the good work in Italy, is the attention given by some of the priests to the claims of the gospel. When Gavazzi was preaching the glad tidings of a free salvation to thousands of his countrymen in Florence and Naples, a number of priests, sometimes more than forty, were among his attentive

hearers, most of whom remained after service for inquiry and conversation.

To give permanency to such labours, it is most important that large places of worship, churches, chapels, or tabernacles, should be provided in the leading cities of Italy. These sanctuaries ought not to be opened to advance the interests of any church or sect, but to secure great centres around which multitudes may congregate, to hear in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. Having these views, the Society in Aid of the Religious Reformation in Southern Italy proposes, as one of its first objects, to maintain two preachers who have for some time drawn together hearers impressed with the truth and desirous of promoting it, and to prepare more for the new places of worship to be established. In furtherance of these views it was an object of Gavazzi's recent visit to this country "to open a large chapel, for the present, in Naples, and afterwards in Rome." Garibaldi, when in Naples, made the preacher a present of the Church of San Sebastian, the grant of which, however, has not been subsequently confirmed. It is hoped that Ricasoli will see the wishes of the liberator of Naples fully carried out.

As it will be useless to open places for preaching evangelical truth, unless preachers are raised up to fill them, a favourite and most important object of Gavazzi is "to provide the means for preparing future evangelizers," and in connection

with this part of his plan, we have the gratifying statement that "several priests are already desirous to work in the evangelization of their country." There are at present about ten priests who are earnestly longing to co-operate with this zealous leader in preaching the gospel which they have received, and to whose wants it is the duty of Christian friends to minister, as when they abandon the Romish Church they sacrifice, in most cases, all their former means of support. In many instances, these men have not only resigned all the living they derived from the Church, but have been totally abandoned by their families. They ought to share in the sympathies of those who hold the Protestant faith, and not be left to suffer privation because they have obeyed the requirements of truth. Those who are seeking to aid the Reformation in Italy will find an excellent opportunity of doing great good if they will extend a helping hand to these men, who are making such sacrifices for the truth.

A college in Naples, to educate pious and gifted men for the evangelical ministry, would materially assist to provide a supply of faithful and suitably educated men to carry on the good work in future generations.

Young men of piety, who are now being emancipated from the gross delusions and the Jesuitical morals of the Romish Church, and priests who abandon her altars with the desire to proclaim the

gospel to their countrymen, would alike benefit by such an institution. It has been most truthfully observed by the Rev. J. R. M'Dougall, of the Presbyterian Church, Florence, that "Italy, before all other lands, needs men of thought and acquirement. The silent steady progress of the Waldenses, and the success of De Sanctis and Mazzarella, show it. Italy, with her fastidious ear, and polished taste, and classic tongue, demands a thoroughly equipped ministry to overthrow the spiritual power of the Man of Sin."

This observation, made with reference to the Waldensian Theological College, recently established in Florence, will apply even more forcibly to the college proposed by Gavazzi for Naples. It may be well here to adduce the testimony of Mr. Dunn, as the result of careful observation, who says, "that the people of Italy give the preference to their own countrymen, is unquestionable; partly, as has been stated, on account of the prejudices they entertain against all priests, and partly from national considerations. Painful, therefore, as it may be to many excellent persons to hear it," he adds, "I cannot refrain from expressing a decided opinion that the Vaudois Church, with all its excellency, is not the agency through which Italy will be evangelized." If the liberality of Christians in Protestant countries should enable the projector of this measure to realize his wish, the alumni as they are sent forth will, it may be

reasonably expected, find a more ready access to their Italian compatriots, than the Waldensians can expect.

The Waldenses have displayed great zeal in the cause of Italian evangelization, and their project of a college in Florence has been well sustained by the liberality of Christians in Great Britain and Ireland, by whom principally the necessary funds have been contributed; but they will have to contend with the prejudice existing against foreigners, who have to learn the language in which they teach and preach, and can with difficulty attain that mastery over it which will place them on a level with Italians. While admiring the devotedness of the brethren who have come up from the valleys, we must not regard their college as a substitute for that projected for Naples, where it is intended that the professors and students should be native Italians.

Gavazzi proposes to enter on this work only as his plan is approved and sustained in this country. It is not his wish to erect a lofty pile of buildings with the architectural pretensions usually pertaining to a college, or to begin any department of the work for whose permanence provision has not been made. When funds are raised sufficient to endow a single professorship, one professor would be appointed, and others would be added as the means of their support were obtained. It would be a fatal calamity if any

project were formed, and any part of the work were begun, and then allowed to fail.

Perhaps there is no part of the plan of Gavazzi more deserving the consideration of the friends of the gospel in Italy, than that relating to the proposed Theological College in Naples. It affords occasion for the exercise of Christian philanthropy, and presents strong claims on the wealthy members of the Christian Church. They who may feel sensible of the great mercies they have received of the Lord, and are anxious to know what monument they may best raise to the divine honour, will do well to consider the claims of an Italian Evangelical College in Naples. It would be much to the honour of our Protestant country if we had such a college, to stand as the expression of our gratitude for the great work which God has wrought for Italy in our days.

One very important object contemplated by Gavazzi is to establish a printing-office, for the purpose of publishing a daily evangelical paper and religious tracts by Italian writers, independently of foreign printing.

The value of the press as a means of diffusing religious truth is too well understood to require any arguments in its favour. It stands second only to the pulpit as the means of imparting truth, dispersing error, conducting sinners to Christ, and guiding them in the path to heaven. In Italy it is already the vehicle through which

truth is extensively communicated, and as the good work of the schoolmaster advances, its power will be more extensively felt. Gavazzi states, in a sermon he preached in 1855, that "the supposed proportion of those who can read is, in Lombardy, from thirty to forty in a hundred; in Piedmont, from twenty to thirty in a hundred; in Tuscany, from ten to twenty in a hundred; in the Northern Roman States, from five to ten in a hundred; whilst among the inhabitants of the districts thirty miles round Rome, not one in a hundred can read." Thus we see that the ability of the Italians to read increases according to their distance from the city of Rome, and as the power of Popery is now on the wane throughout Italy, the blessing of popular education will be extended. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that Italy should be well supplied with a pure literature, and that men of intelligence as well as piety should be able to speak to their countrymen through the medium of the press.

It is satisfactory to learn that the Irish ladies are so much pleased with this part of Gavazzi's plan, that they have undertaken to subscribe or collect the amount necessary for the purchase of a good printing-press, some six or seven hundred pounds.*

* Contributions for the College, and the other objects contemplated by Signor Gavazzi, may be sent to the Secretary of his Committee, the Rev. Messac Thomas, 9, Serjeants' Inn, Fleet Street, E.C.

The most important object now engaging the solicitude of the Italian reformer yet remains to be noticed—the foundation of a Church for evangelized Italy. He is deeply impressed with the necessity of so organizing the new converts, that instead of being scattered and divided, they may enjoy the blessings of church order, and form such a religious community as may present to the world around them a noble example of Christian unity in a church which shall be "a pillar and stay of the truth," and witness a good confession of the "great mystery of godliness."

Christians of various denominations in our country may help the Reformer and his Christian brethren in this important matter more by their prayers than by their directions or advice. It may be hoped that the various churches of our land understand how the evangelical Christians in Italy differ from the Protestants of Great Britain and Germany; and with the conscientious attachment we all have for our respective communities, we may yet concede to our Italian brethren the right to the full exercise of the liberty they have achieved, in forming such a church-organization as they may deem most accordant with the ecclesiastical polity of the New Testament, and best adapted to preserve and increase the converts who are now being gathered into the fellowship of the gospel.

That the Italian converts in large numbers will

not adopt the church government of the Waldenses must be perfectly understood by all who have had an opportunity of learning the state of their feeling in reference to that venerable community. Equally evident is it that the gatherings of the brethren for reading and studying the Scriptures, and prayer, or for occasional preaching, will neither meet the spiritual wants of the unconverted, nor duly minister to the edification of believers. A large portion of the Christians of Italy say, with Signor Mazzarella, "We are neither Roman Catholics, nor Protestants, nor Vaudois, nor anything denominational."

The earnest desire of Signor Gavazzi in planning the Church of the future in Italy, is, that it may consist only of those who are living members of the body of Christ, that it may profess all the essential truths of the gospel, embracing "the faith of a Christian man," and at the same time not insisting on points of faith or order, respecting which diversity of opinion exists among true Christians. The question of a liturgical service, or of extemporaneous prayer, is left open, and such a liturgy as may be constructed may be used by the minister, in whole or in part, or find its substitute in free prayer according to his inclination or ability.

To estimate the position of Italian brethren correctly, we must understand them when they say "We are not Protestants." They do not separate from the Church of Rome, as did many of their

own countrymen, or our forefathers, at the time of the Lutheran Reformation. Their ideas of Christian obligation will not be realized by striking off the old Roman road just at our point of departure, and traversing the path we have made three hundred years since. They regard Rome as a very early apostasy, and their desire is to go back to the time, not of Luther the Reformer, but of Paul the Apostle.

Let us hear Gavazzi on this important point:—

"As a lecturer and expounder of my principles, as you well know, I never forget to declare solemnly that I am no Protestant! for I have nothing to protest against. My aim (I speak not as a leader, but as a simple individual) is not to protest against Rome, but to destroy the whole system, root and branch. There is nothing to reform in the Church of Rome, which is an abuse from beginning to end. Thus, the mission which I have taken upon myself, in union with many other independent Christian ministers, is to annihilate Romanism! My glory, therefore, is in being an annihilator, and not a protester. As such, I hope and feel that my Protestant friends will not find me far from them in my hatred against the common enemy.

"As an Italian, however, there are still further and grave reasons for declining to embrace any Protestant denomination. It would entirely destroy my hopes of the future evangelization of Italy. It may be wrong, but so strong are the

prejudices of the Italians against Protestantism at large, that to go to them in a Protestant name would be like driving from my platforms the very people I look for. This is a fact. And so deeply is the prejudice rooted, that even the Waldenses and the independent Italian ministers, publicly declare that they will not tolerate a Protestanized Italy. It follows, then, that not only am I not a Protestant nominally, but that, for the future of Italy, I am also ready o resist any and all attempts to Protestantize my fatherland. I take this opportunity, therefore, to exclaim against those societies that spend their money in sending and maintaining missionaries in Italy. I say publicly that this is the very way to strengthen Romanism, and bind the Italians closer both to the system and its priesthood, and thus endanger, if not ruin, the possibility of a sincere regenerating of the Italians to the Christianity of the gospel. Let the work, therefore, be left to the Italians themselves, aided by Protestant advice and prayers only. These will be of much and great service; and in cases only of extreme distress, let the work be succoured with even substantial support."

CHAPTER XI.

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION AND COLPORTAGE.

THE religious awakening in Italy originated in the extensive circulation of the Word of God, and by the same means it must be extended throughout that kingdom. No division of opinion exists among us as to the efficiency of the Divine Word to make the ignorant "wise unto salvation," and "the man of God perfect, throughly furnished to all good works;" and every one whose heart is in this great movement will contemplate with gratitude the arrangements employed with a view to place the Sacred Scriptures in the hands of all the people who are willing to receive and read them. Now, as of old, the "sword of the Spirit" has proved an effective weapon in destroying the formidable power of the Romish priesthood, while the dread it inspires will easily account for all the Papal anathemas hurled against those by whom this spiritual weapon is wielded.

Bibles and Testaments found their way into Northern Italy, in the memorable year 1848, when they were eagerly read, and secretly passed from one reader to another, notwithstanding the utmost vigilance of the custom-house officers and the

Romish priesthood. In the year 1856 four thousand Bibles and Testaments were sold in Genoa, and above two thousand in Nice, at the depository kept by the Madiai's, and in the following year it is believed that more than twenty thousand Italians were diligently perusing the Word of God. Since the latter period the field of operation has been greatly enlarged. The power of Austria and Rome is curtailed, while Tuscany, Naples, and the States of Parma and Modena are absorbed in a united Italy. By these great changes, twenty-three millions of Italians have acquired a legal right to possess and read the sacred volume.

To quote the cheering language of the Bible Society's Report, "the day of Italy's visitation has dawned, and she is beginning to emancipate herself from the fetters of that spiritual tyranny in which she has long writhed, and groaned, and bled. Now, over the greater part of that land, from Calabria and Sicily to the far north, the colporteur of your Society can safely, without let or hindrance, carry his sacred merchandise, and offer the precious jewel of inspired truth to rich and poor. From the Adriatic to the Mediterranean the Word of God can have free course—one state only, dwarfed and enfeebled indeed, clinging with infatuated blindness to its perverse policy of putting the black mark of proscription upon the Bible. Nor will the Italian work be complete, till under the shadow of the Vatican and St. Peter's, where the echo of

many a bull against Bible reading has made timid men tremble, the Scriptures shall be as freely circulated as in Florence or Naples."

New facilities have been obtained for conveying the Bible into all these countries, and securing its transmission without any of the delays and impediments that would otherwise have continued. In the words of a gentleman deeply interested in this department of Christian labour, "the incorporation of the different states into one kingdom has greatly facilitated the work of colportage and the transport of Bibles. There is no difficulty about passports, and the vexatious examination of luggage and merchandise at so many frontier revenue stations is all done away. The lines of railway communication connecting the various capitals afford additional facilities for the work."

Another most important advantage has just been gained in favour of the circulation of the Bible in Italy, by the printing of the sacred volume in Turin. Even in Sardinia, where the distribution of Bibles has been permitted, the printing either of the Old or New Testament has been prohibited, unless under the sanction of the Romish archbishop. Our Waldensian brethren in Turin, considering that the spirit of the times in Sardinia was superior to the law, resolved to try their right to print the Word of God, as well as to publish it, and passed through the press an edition of two thousand copies of Diodati's Testament. This

Testament is described as "a beautiful volume in octavo, printed in large and clear type, well suited for aged persons, and those unaccustomed to read," and is sold retail at from fifteen to twenty pence, according to the binding. As the Government of Italy has refrained from noticing this breach of an unjust law, the work of printing the Bible may now be expected to proceed in Italy without interruption, and it may be hoped that the law which has been infringed with impunity, will soon be entirely repealed.

Since the Italian field has been thrown open to the Bible, the work of distribution has proceeded in a manner which it is most gratifying to contemplate, and is steadily on the increase. At the anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in 1860, the number of colporteurs employed by that institution was twenty, and the sales of the Scriptures during the first quarter of the year had been five thousand in the north of Italy, and in Tuscany about three thousand copies. Nearly three thousand had been issued in Milan, and the whole number sold in all Italy during the year had been twenty-four thousand. At the last anniversary the numbers for the year had been thirty thousand; and the colporteurs, who had "traversed the land with a cheap and open Bible," were not less than thirty, all in the employment of this invaluable institution, by whose agency all these Bibles and Testaments had been sold.

At the same time, as the last report of the Bible Society reminds us, these issues do not embrace *all* the Scripture-circulation effected in Italy during the twelve months. Other agencies had a part in the good work. The Geneva Committee, the Waldensian Church, and Scotch Bible Societies, have displayed a zealous readiness to share the responsibility and privilege of giving the Bible to the Italian people.

The Edinburgh Bible Society reports that, on the average, about eight colporteurs have been in regular work since the period of Mr. Jameson's mission. In the month of December, one of them was at work in Florence, two in Naples, one at Leghorn, one in the duchies of Parma and Modena, one in Tuscany, one in Messina, Sicily, and the last part of the time in Naples and part in Messina. The rate of sales has been nearly 1000 per month, 5348 copies having been disposed of from July 1st to December 31st. But this number does not include certain returns that were still due. On the whole, the committee have been so encouraged by the results, that they have resolved to increase the number of labourers to ten. The whole scheme will involve, with a staff of ten labourers to maintain, at least £500 a year. They earnestly invite the Christian public to rally around them, in order to make full proof of the remarkable opening in Providence for the diffusion of the Word of God in Italy.

To quote the language of a faithful agent of the Bible Society, "of all who traverse Italy, as it regards its future welfare, the most important person is the humble colporteur. All that attracts the educated stranger to this classic land may have no attractions for him. With one aim he wends his way, often amid many discouragements, through its cities and villages, its highways and byways; but that aim is a noble one—he offers to the rich and to the poor that blessed book, which is the best friend to Italian unity, the people's best safeguard against oppression."

Besides the colporteurs in the employment of the British and Foreign Bible Society, there are others engaged by the Waldenses and the Italian Christians, as well as by the Nice and Genevan committees, whose work it is to carry through the country various religious publications as well as Bibles. The pastor, Meille, in Turin, has ten colporteurs under his care, the superintendence of whose labours occupies a large portion of his time.

The following selections from the journals of the colporteurs, and the reports of the agents by whom their labours are directed, are taken from the last report of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and cannot fail to prove that the sowers have gone forth to sow the incorruptible seed, while a Divine Providence guides them, and a Divine blessing prospers their work.

Genoa, in which the Church of Rome boasts that Protestantism has never taken root, has become a centre whence the pure streams of revealed truth have flowed forth to convey life and health to the surrounding region. During the twelve months preceding May, 1861, between seven and eight thousand copies of the Sacred Scriptures had been sold by colporteurs from that city. Thus are these important operations described:—

"During the past year, Signor Betti has had the satisfaction of diffusing, over a wide district in his native land, upwards of seven thousand copies of God's Word; and of these nearly three thousand have been sold in what but recently formed a portion of the States of the Church. During the bloody strife which ended in the disruption of these States, the walls of the Vatican often echoed to sounds of anger and sorrow; but surely the wrath of man has redounded to the praise of God.

"In connection with the depôt at Genoa there are nine colporteurs, all more or less efficient. The district which they traverse is a wide one, as you may suppose from their number. Two of them, after visiting the newly opened part of the Pope's (or rather what was the Pope's) territory, south-east of Bologna, traversed the Abruzzi along or near the shores of the Adriatic, and then crossed the country to Naples. Having obtained another supply of books from our depôt there, they are now on their way northward. The rains, which fell so

abundantly towards the close of last year, impeded not a little the labours of colportage. One of the men, Carlo Lastrico, writing from Chieti, says that he had arrived there after a long and fatiguing journey on account of the bad weather, and the swollen rivers, but was consoled on his arrival at that town by witnessing the enthusiasm of the people as soon as he offered the Scriptures for sale. A canon, after expostulating with him in vain, tried to work upon the feelings of the bystanders; but the effort to hinder the spread of the truth was vain, for the sympathies of the people were with the colporteur, not with the ecclesiastic, as was soon proved by the sales. Lastrico's companion, Luigi Bartoli, has also been very successful. At Teramo, he had no sooner arranged his stall than numbers came to purchase; but at the close of the second day, the archbishop went to the governor to complain of this strange innovation on the rights of the Church and the usages of the city from time immemorial. Accordingly, the colporteur was summoned before the governor, who told him that the Sardinian laws were not yet in force, and asked him, as a personal favour, to sell, not in the streets, but in the house where he was staying. Bartoli, of course, complied with this request, and had no reason to be dissatisfied with the result. The colporteurs say that the people in the Abruzzi show more anxiety to possess the Scriptures than those in the Marches; at the same time they complain

much of the ignorance of the country people and artizans in the States of the Church.

"Another of these useful labourers, Talmon, confines himself almost entirely to the Waldensian valleys, where, during the last four months, he has sold 223 Bibles and Testaments.

"The number of Jews scattered over Piedmont and Lombardy is considerable, and one of the colporteurs from Genoa, Termidezo, occupies himself chiefly with these children of the dispersion, supplying them not only with their own Scriptures in Hebrew, but the entire Word of God in Italian. Another, Annibale Descagni, who travels over Piedmont and Lombardy, always pays a visit to the head-quarters of the gendarmes. After having offered them the precious volume for sale, he with permission leaves his pack under their care, and traverses the district without molestation.

"One of these worthy men expresses the pleasure with which he, more than once, has met quite unexpectedly with individuals, and sometimes with families, who had long possessed and valued the Bible. Of these, some, having left the Church of Rome, met together as they were able, that they might edify one another to the best of their power; others were keeping up a system of compromise, through fear, needing, as he thinks, some one to explain to them more fully the will of God, in which case he believed 'they would separate themselves from the world.'

"The depôt at Leghorn is an open shop in the most commercial street in the city. It is further useful as a place where an assorted box of Bibles can be made up as it is needed, for other parts of Italy. Being a free port, there are no colporteurs attached to this depôt, as any books brought back unsold would be liable to duty a second time on going out of the city; and the depôt being well known and very accessible, a colporteur is not needed for Leghorn, except occasionally.

"During the year, nearly 8000 copies of the Sacred Volume have been issued from the depôt at Florence. Although the work finds little favour, and deserves little toleration in the eyes of the priests, no hostility has been manifested on the part of the authorities. Colporteurs traverse the city without molestation, and sometimes in the private dwelling, and sometimes in the public thoroughfare, find ample success to encourage their labours. The depôt is eligibly situated, and Signor Fabbroni attends to its duties with diligence and efficiency. The work is thus depicted:—

"'Signor Fabbroni has found some difficulty in obtaining good colporteurs. During the last quarter his numbers varied from five to seven, and now he has ten in the employment of the Society, some of whom, however, are only on trial. He is very anxious to have faithful labourers, who will persevere and take an interest in the work.

"'The colporteurs from Tuscany have traversed

that Duchy and the Marches, where some of them have been very successful in disposing of the Scriptures. One of them has sold a considerable number of small Testaments in Florence, chiefly to Piedmontese soldiers who were detained in that city for a few days. Another, Pasquale Cappelletti —(who but for the death of his wife would now have been at Naples)—has, during the last three weeks of January, disposed of nearly a hundred Bibles and Testaments in the city of Pisa, many of these having been purchased by students of the University. He stood under the arches of the main street of that old Etrurian city, with his tray of books, crying, "*La luce! La luce!*" ("The light! The light!") and not in vain.

"'One of these men, labouring at present in the Marches, says that he finds the people well disposed and willing to purchase, only he is afraid to go any great distance from the larger towns, for fear of brigands! It is not often, however, that they are fettered in their movements by any such feeling. The reception which the colporteur receives at the different places he visits is very various, though generally favourable. One, during the past month, after a long and fatiguing walk to a village in the south-west of Tuscany, found the people so ignorant and indifferent that he did not succeed in disposing of a single copy. Another labourer, arriving one evening at a small country village in the same state, the name of which it may

be as well not to mention, was accosted by a priest, who with a natural curiosity inquired what the stranger's basket contained? On hearing that it was Bibles and New Testaments, he told the man to take his stand in the village on the following morning with his books spread out before him; "for," says he, "I am the village schoolmaster; I know who among the parents of the children can afford to buy the Scriptures, and I will tell them to do so, for it will be a useful book to read in the school." Next day the colporteur was at his post, the priest was true to his word, and several, both old and young, profited by this opportunity of buying a Bible or a New Testament.

"'In all towns of any size, as well as in many country districts, the daily Lenten sermon is being delivered; and, in many instances, these discourses are directed against the efforts now being made to circulate God's Word in Italy. A colporteur, at Ancona, complains that a priest has been very zealous on this point, and not without some success. Their exhortations, however, sometimes promote rather than hinder the sale of the Bible. One of the colporteurs from the depôt at Florence, Giuseppe degli Innocenti, makes the following remarks in his February report: "During the first part of this month I sold some copies at Prato, where I met with many who showed that they prized the Word of God, and loved not only to read it, but to speak of it. I met with no diffi-

culty whatever, but on the contrary, a dislike to the Church of Rome, and a zeal for the gospel that lead me to hope that many souls there will receive Jesus Christ. In Florence, many preachers, priests and friars, speak against the gospel and Protestants. Whilst some lend a willing ear, many listen with contempt; and on visiting the shops, and other places near the churches where these priests preach, I sold several copies of the Bible to Roman Catholics, who before felt no desire to read it."

"'Another colporteur from the same depôt, who has been visiting the villages around the foot of the mountain on which stands the beautifully-situated and far-famed convent of Vallambrosa, says he found, wherever he went, that many had already bought the Bible, and spoke of it with respect, notwithstanding the opposition of the priests. He offered the Bible freely and without molestation, both in the shops and on the highway; and though others had often been in the same district, with a similar object, he was not unsuccessful.'

"The entrance of the Scriptures into Naples, where social degradation has appeared in painful contrast with the fairest scenes of material beauty, and where Popish superstition has been so long rampant, holding the ignorant populace in servile subjection, was indeed an event long to be remembered, and full of deepest interest. The eager throngs that gathered around the Bible stall in the crowded 'Toledo,' gave audible expression to the

joy they felt, that some gleam of religious liberty had at length dawned upon their unhappy country; and the avidity with which the Sacred Volume was purchased proved the intense eagerness of multitudes to possess that heavenly treasure which had been so long withheld from them.

"When the Word of God was first offered for sale in the city of Naples, the people seemed slow to realize the liberty which the overthrow of the oppressive government had accorded to them, and many hesitated to purchase it, for, they said, it was a prohibited book. This feeling of reluctance soon yielded to a desire to possess the Sacred Volume; and the sudden appearance of a book, which so few had ever seen, in one of the busiest streets of that populous city, caused no little excitement, and soon became a general subject of conversation.

"The book seemed almost as new to the priests as it was to the people, and some of the former were among the first to buy it. One did so with many misgivings, for the only Bible he had ever seen was in several quarto volumes (Martini, with notes), and he could not believe that the little book which he held in his hand contained the entire Word of God. He was assured that the book was complete, minus, of course, the Apocrypha. He made his purchase, but took down the address of the colporteur, lest his suspicions should prove correct. Another priest not only purchased a Bible, but expressed a wish to pro-

cure any Protestant books which explained it. He has since bought elsewhere M'Crie's 'History of the Suppression of the Reformation in Italy,' as well as other religious works.

"A copy of De Sanctis' letter to Pius IX. came into the possession of a Neapolitan printer, who immediately reprinted it on a broadsheet, and affixed copies to the corners of some of the streets by way of advertising it. Among the crowd who were looking at this new wonder was a Tuscan colporteur. A priest came behind him, and, clapping him on the back, told him to buy it, for it was the truth. 'Buy it,' said he, 'and keep it by you as long as you live.'

"Taking the clergy as a body, no doubt comparatively few can look upon the unrestricted circulation of the Word of God with any feelings of pleasure. It would be strange were it otherwise. One day, when a colporteur was standing at his stall waiting for purchasers, two friars approached, and in paternal tones advised him for his own sake to take his prohibited books away. The people, they said, were very ignorant, and so prejudiced in favour of their own religion, that any day he might suffer personal violence from them. He thanked them for their counsel, but showing no inclination to profit by it, they left him. Another day two priests came to the same stall, and, turning over the Bibles in a contemptuous manner, said they were incomplete, and were

prohibited. One of Garibaldi's soldiers standing by, begged them to repeat what they had said, but as they said so his voice became so angry in its tones, and his attitude so menacing, that the two worthies made a hasty retreat.

"Often one of these red coats might be seen watching the sale of the Bibles, but apparently with no intention of becoming a purchaser; then, excited by some remarks, he would speak energetically to those around him, first, in favour of the book; next, warming with his subject, he would abuse the priests, and so having relieved his mind, pass on. Such scenes were not uncommon in Naples for some weeks after the Bibles had been introduced.

"On several occasions the priests complained that the Scriptures were incomplete, but one of the colporteurs appears to have committed to memory the remarks of St. Girolamo upon the apocryphal books, and with these he edifies the priests, who, not knowing what to say in reply, at once take their departure, for it would never do to contradict St. Girolamo.

"Cases of painful indifference and spiritual darkness are sometimes met with. One man, an apothecary, when asked to purchase a Bible, said distinctly that he was a pagan, and had no wish to change his religion. Pointing to an image in his shop, 'When I look at that idol,' he said, 'it reminds me of Jesus Christ.' The colporteur

recommended him to read the New Testament as the best way of learning about the Saviour. But no; the poor man said he wished to keep to the religion of his ancestors, in which he had been brought up; he had no wish to change. Other members of the same trade were more enlightened. One, the moment he saw the Bible, was much pleased. 'Ah!' he said, 'this is a book which all fathers of families should possess;' and he at once purchased a copy. Another chemist, living in a small town near Naples, when waited on by a colporteur, said, 'I don't think as do the people around me. None of us,' meaning his family, 'do so. Look around my shop; you see neither images nor pictures of the saints.' Then, pulling out a book of Bible stories, a very common book in Italy, he said, 'I have a sort of Bible, but I don't think it is all there, and I should like to have the complete book.' He then purchased a Bible, and expressed a wish to have some Protestant books, 'for,' said he, 'I want to be well instructed.' May the Lord the Spirit open his heart to receive the truth as it is in Jesus!

"At the Jesuits' College, now used as an hospital for wounded soldiers, Dr. —— met with a priest, a mild-looking man, to whom he presented a small Bible, and a New Testament in large type with references. The latter he took with peculiar pleasure, saying, 'This is just the book for me.' The poor man had spent the last twelve years of

his life in prison as a political offender. The first five months he had been confined in the fortress of St. Elmo, in a damp dungeon dimly lighted with a small lamp, and without even a handful of straw to lie upon. After having received the last rites of the Church as a dying man, he was removed, by order of the medical attendant, to a less cruel abode, where he existed till it was no longer in the power of his persecutors to detain him captive. In the same college, one Sabbath afternoon, the Rev. Mr. Hamilton conducted a short service for the benefit of the invalid soldiers of the English brigade; and it was refreshing, in the rooms so lately occupied by the disciples of Ignatius Loyola, to listen to the Word of God, and to join in the short and simple prayers of the Litany, the responses being led by a wounded English soldier.

"It is an interesting sight to see, in the crowded thoroughfare of the Toledo, a lad sitting at a large tray containing only Bibles and New Testaments, and with his broad Neapolitan accent arresting the attention of passers-by with the simple cry of, '*Il Libro! Il Libro!*' ('The Book! The Book!')

"Were it for this alone, surely 1860 would be an important and interesting year in the history of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies; for in the summer, it should be remembered, the Word of God was taken to Palermo by Lieutenant Graydon. The year 1560 was also one to which we must look back with melancholy interest, for three cen-

turies ago this very year, after suffering much previous persecution, the Vaudois colonists in Calabria were butchered man by man, and a band of Christians was cruelly exterminated, who, with their descendants, might have been the Lord's remembrancers on behalf of those around them during successive generations.

"Still for the brighter day that has dawned let us thank God, and take courage. At the same time, if, in answer to prayer, the barriers which for ages have kept back the Word of God from the people have been in a great measure removed, Christians would do well to remember that, if urgent supplications were needed at a throne of grace before, they are still more urgently needed now, inasmuch as the people of Italy have had thrown upon them the awful responsibility of those who possess, or who may possess a free Bible. May the good Spirit Himself be the teacher of many, leading them to search the Scriptures, and to obey that blessed precept—'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house!'"

By the close of 1860, although the period of action had been comparatively short, 4438 copies had been sold in Naples. And the demand still continues, if not with augmented eagerness, yet with gratifying steadiness. A depôt is placed under the care of M. Cresi, a Neapolitan by birth, who devotes himself to the religious welfare of his

countrymen, and means are adopted for continuing the open sale of the Scriptures in the streets and suburbs of the city. More colporteurs will be employed, as soon as qualifiéd persons can be selected.

"Sig. Cresi is himself a Neapolitan, and was for many years in exile. Through the liberality of a Scotch friend, he now resides at Naples, where he labours as an evangelist among his fellow-countrymen. Two lads have been engaged by him to sell the Scriptures in the streets of Naples; and a man, also a Neapolitan, is now employed as a colporteur in the provinces. Sig. Cresi is much interested in the work, and whilst he acknowledges the difficulty of finding labourers on the spot, is anxious that it should be left as much as possible in the hands of Neapolitans, because he thinks they will prove more efficient and less expensive. He will engage other colporteurs as soon as he meets with any persons whom he considers suitable."

A colporteur, writing from Naples, says:—

"I had imagined, before reaching Naples, that owing to the ignorance reigning there, the sale would be almost nothing. But how I was mistaken! Wherever I went, hardly was the nature of the book which I sold made known than the people crowded around me to purchase. It is enough to say, that one day with another selling about 150 francs' worth—from the 19th September till to-day, the 30th—I have sold, be-

tween Bibles and Testaments, to the amount of 1590 francs."

"When the tide of revolution passed from Central Italy to Sicily, the late agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Lieut. Graydon, immediately proceeded to Palermo, and began to arrange his plans for opening a sale of the Scriptures. Vexatious difficulties delayed the commencement, of operations in Sicily. Resident English declined all friendly co-operation, and rather discouraged than favoured the good work; but at length the startling announcement was made in the official gazette, which circulates through the whole island, and by placards affixed to the walls of Palermo, that a Bible depôt had been established, and that the Word of God might be bought for a trifling sum by all wishing to possess it. The sales, however, did not, during the few weeks Lieut. Graydon remained at Palermo, answer the sanguine expectations he had cherished, partly because of the intense excitement of the populace, and partly because of the dread of priestly anathema."

At a later period Mr. Bruce visited the island, and now that a more orderly state of things prevails, and the people begin to realize the fact of their liberty, the prospects of success are bright. Nearly 700 copies had been sold in Sicily by the end of last year. Writing from Messina, Mr. Bruce, the agent, remarks:—"Here we have encountered such difficulties as may reasonably be

expected in a small town. A man who had agreed to sell New Testaments at a stand in the streets, warned by a priest, afterwards declined. One or two of the booksellers would have taken Bibles, but they did not care for New Testaments. At last, through an English gentleman, I found a man who willingly aided us, and we have sold all the copies I had with me. It is the whole book that is chiefly in demand, and of it I have no doubt a good number might be sold in this part of Sicily. All the booksellers here, however, as well as many of the people, have been warned by the chaplain of the soldiers, who has made himself particularly active in the matter. He told the colporteur and the youth that they would be imprisoned for selling prohibited books. The latter being frightened, went to the Prefetto, who, in reply, said to him, 'You may continue to sell the book.' In the small cities on the east coast of Sicily the priests doubtless have influence, and will do their utmost to prevent the circulation of the Scriptures; but their success will be only temporary, for the books will surely and quietly make way. Four of the Bibles were sold by one of Garibaldi's soldiers, who was staying at an hotel here."

The following extract from the journal of another colporteur relates also to Sicily:—

"Colporteurs are now at work, by whose agency, and by the opening of depôts in the principal towns, the Scriptures will be widely available

in this thickly-peopled but fearfully-degraded island.

"Having arrived at N. N., I set up my stall in the principal street. The sight of such books appeared a wonder to the people, and many came to purchase. The priests seeing this, commenced their usual opposition, saying that I was a sower of discord, a murderer of souls, and so on. I said to them that what murdered souls was sin, not the Word of God, etc. Immediately the people, excited by these reverend men, began to get tumultuous, and I know not what might have happened to myself but for the arrival of three gentlemen, who protected the books, and not only purchased some of them, but defended my cause and that of the gospel, which they told me they had known since the year 1848; and this day I sold to the value of above 40 francs. Next day the police, on the part of the priests, tried to send me away, but as my papers were perfectly regular, the delegate to whom they referred replied that he could not give orders contrary to the statute; and thus I was left at liberty to prosecute my sales. After dinner three of the principal personages in the town approached my counter, and each bought a Bible and some tracts: this so encouraged the bystanders that I sold to the value of above 60 francs. One of the gentlemen who had defended me the day before, returning, asked me many questions concerning my creed. . . . . He pressed my hand, and

said, 'There are several of us here of the same faith.' The priests, seeing they could do nothing through the magistrates, tried another plan. Some persons came to me and declared that if I continued to sell the books, I should not leave their city alive. Do not, however, fear much in regard to me; God is well able to deliver me as well as all those who put their trust in Him."

The great interest attaching to the journals of the colporteurs renders it unnecessary to apologize for the length of the extracts already given, and for adding others from various sources. In many cases the scenes of action are not named, as it is frequently found that the information published in such documents furnishes a clue to the Romish priests and their zealous assistants, who track the course of the colporteur, to persecute him and oppose his work.

"To-day I was in one of the suburbs, where I sold some books, and returning to the city and passing a piazza where a number of persons were collected, I began to exhibit the Bibles, when a person about forty years of age came out of the crowd towards me, held out his hand, and pressed mine with true joy, although I had never seen him before. He told me that he came from Voghera; that three years ago he had bought a Bible and some books from a colporteur who was passing through that neighbourhood; that by reading them he had come to know the Saviour Jesus Christ,

and from that time had experienced much inward peace, and had kept back all Roman Catholic devotions. He added that this was known in all his district, as he had never concealed his convictions, ... which had drawn down upon him a terrible war (guerra tremenda) from the priest, a war which, however, had not in the least shaken his convictions, but rendered them more dear and precious. He wished to remain all the day with me, and I found he had full knowledge of the gospel, as he entered into all particulars of doctrine with such a combined clearness and enlargement of heart as showed one possessed of true faith, and capable of being an evangelist to others. He came to lodge in the same inn as myself, and we spent great part of the night in meditating on the Word and prayer together. He bought a Bible, a New Testament, two 'Family Prayers,' and six small books, to regale some persons in his own country who had manifested a desire for them. Now he is rejoiced, as he says, to have been able, for the first time, to meditate and pray over the holy Word along with a chosen brother.

"At ——, as the police seemed desirous of seizing the stock of books, M—— forwarded them to the next town, reserving only some Bibles. A priest asserted that the version of Diodati was false, while that of Martini was correct. The colporteurs replied that they sold both versions. The

priests, when asked from what Martini and Diodati had translated, could give no reply.

"At C——, the colporteurs were very badly received, being driven out of the town, and pelted with stones.

"At S——, a priest purchased a Bible, and advised all his parishioners to do the same. Many of them followed his example.

"At B——, a priest bought Paleario's 'Death of Christ,' and exhorted the bystanders to deal with us. This man seems well-disposed towards the gospel.

"At San P——, the people had gathered round the colporteurs, and begun to buy, when suddenly a priest appeared, spoke strongly against the Bible, and dispersed the gathering.

"Colporteur C—— has been four months working in the valley of the Arno, and on the north-west frontier of Tuscany. Has sold at the rate of 70 Bibles per month, principally among the country people in the lowland farms and hillside cottages.

"In P——, sold many copies, especially in Café L——. Went to the doors of advocates, judges, procurators, prefects, and the various guard-houses. One copy seems to have been blessed by God, for the purchaser meeting me a few days after he had bought it, expressed his gratitude at having found so precious a book, which he had long sought in vain.

"At O——, many poor *contadini* were most

anxious to have the Bible, but could not pay for it.

"At L——, the multitude of priests hindered me. The 'Delegato' warned me, saying, 'So far as I am concerned these are good books. I respect them, and give you liberty to sell as many as you can to whoever asks for them, but be on your guard, for this town is yet held in slavery by an iniquitous race of priests, who may instigate some one to do you harm.'

"At P——, set up a stall in the public square. Was accosted by several brethren in Christ, with whom had meetings for exposition of Scripture in the house of a postman in the town. Many *contadini* came.

"This excellent colporteur has visited at least fifty outlying villages in his route.

"Another colporteur, after most active work in Leghorn, travelled southwards along the western shores of Tuscany, through the Maremma. On returning by Volterra, his Bibles and books were seized, and a process begun against him. After much delay the books were liberated.

"Other colporteurs have made successful tours across the various passes of the Apennines in the direction of Bologna. Though subjected to petty annoyances, through priestly influences, the men themselves have gone their rounds as scatheless as if they had been labouring in home lands. About thirty of these agents have been roaming all

over Central Italy this last year. It is very remarkable that, in circumstances most favourable for its development, no outspoken tendency to infidelity has been observed anywhere during this struggle for civil liberty, such as disgraced the French Revolution. On the contrary, whatever religious desire exists is in the direction of Protestantism and the Bible, which have made other lands so famous, and which, they know, gives no countenance to the precepts and practices of Rome. Let friends help us to sow beside all waters, when we have so noble an opportunity. Our gracious Father who has opened this wide door is making it an effectual one. The Bible is being blessed in the hands of the peasant, who has no human instructor but Him who teacheth savingly and to profit. Travellers assure us that on the banks of classic streams and in their own homes, humble labourers are occasionally found perusing with pleasure and profit the sacred Scriptures."

It is not reasonable to expect that the men whose work it is to convey to the Italians that Word which condemns the teaching of their priests, should fulfil their mission without some degree of persecution. Their work is carried on without any violation of the law, and their trials are inflicted by unreasonable and wicked men, who are too ready in Italy, as in Ireland, to do the bidding of the priesthood. The case of one of the sufferers is thus recorded, and it is most gratifying

to find the holy courage he displayed in resuming his perilous work:—"Romano, labouring in the Val d'Aosta, was assaulted one evening on returning from the country, stabbed, and left for dead. He had excited the enmity and malice of certain fanatics, simply by his great zeal in diffusing the Scriptures. He had to abandon colportage for a time; but on recovering health and strength, he did not hesitate, in spite of all that had occurred, to offer his services anew for the same cause in behalf of which it had been given him to suffer well-nigh unto death."

Another of these worthy and devoted men, Pierre Doro, has recently been removed from the scene of his labours and privations to his eternal rest. His case, which is one of deep, and, in one respect, of melancholy interest, is thus recorded in a letter to the Rev. Dr. Stewart, of Leghorn:—

"My Dear Brother,—I must send you very painful news along with the monthly report of our colporteurs, viz., the sudden death of our dear and excellent Doro, which happened on Friday, 30th November, in the afternoon. For some time past he has written me that he felt himself weak: notwithstanding, he attended with zeal to his work; and you and your friends will read with emotion, I am sure, the letter he wrote me a day or two before he died, and which I inclose. The morning of that day in which he resigned his soul to the Lord, he said to his wife, who was weeping, that

he believed he was drawing near his end, and he spent a good portion of the day in putting all in order in his house. Afterwards he wrote a letter, and having finished it, while sitting opposite his wife, he began to say, with singular solemnity, 'Moglie mia! il termine del mio penare è giunto, io me ne vado al mio Dio.' 'My wife, the end of my troubles has arrived. I am going to my God.' These were the last words he uttered before he closed his eyes, never to open them again here below. The bitterness of that sad event has been increased greatly for the excellent M. Curie, from the disgraceful way in which the local authorities have behaved, by ordering that his body should be buried in an indecorous manner, viz., in the place destined for the sepulture of unbaptized children (out of consecrated ground). M. Curie entreated that that might not take place; but, finding his entreaties useless, he protested more energetically still by deed, refusing, in the most absolute manner, to preside at a funeral conducted in such a manner, and reserving to himself the right to appeal for redress to the proper quarter. The Moderator Malan and I are taking the requisite measures with the ministry here, that reparation may be made for so scandalous an act, and God grant our efforts may not be in vain."

The last report made by this good man is extremely interesting, depicting as it does his faithful labours at the closing scene:—

"AOSTA, 28*th November*, 1860.

"REV. SIR,—I will now give you the report of my work during this month.

"I made another tour to St. Christophore and Isnait, where I sold two New Testaments. Having gone into the stable of a cottage to offer the Bible or New Testament for sale, the father of the family had just been waiting for some time for an opportunity of buying one, and his children, two little girls and a boy, said, 'Papa, papa, buy the Bible.' The good patriarch said, 'Yes, my dear children, we will read it together.'

"A person said to me, while buying the New Testament, 'Our priests no longer preach the gospel to us, and speak no more of God's Word; it is therefore necessary for us to buy it and instruct ourselves.'

"The curates storm from the pulpits to curse those who bring the Word of God for sale, and their parishioners who buy it.

"At Bressogne, where I sold several Bibles, New Testaments, and books, the curate one Sunday insulted the people from the pulpit in such a manner, that they have complained to the fiscal of the public defamation of those who read the gospel. At present there is a process going on against the curate before the fiscal advocate, and they expect a great debate. I would send you a copy of the complaint presented to the fiscal, and signed by several persons. As the drawing up of this com-

plaint was not correct, the terms are being changed; that is why I cannot send you the copy of it. The affair of the curate is getting serious.

"The priests of Aosta, finding no other means of hindering the sale of the Bible, urge on the fanatics to surround me when some one wishes to buy, and cry, 'Don't buy those books; they are false, they are of the devil;' thus many are prevented from buying. I have had to call the policeman twice to threaten with imprisonment the malicious fanatics who have hindered me from selling; and I am now going to begin a process against a shopwoman who makes a regular trade of hindering my work. I will make an example of her to frighten others. I know, and have known, that I am protected by the authorities. The school children are also sent after me to say, and to cry aloud, the most horrible blasphemies against God's Word. I have had great disadvantages this month, and have suffered much, because the sale did not come up to my wants. Everywhere the priests and the fanatics do the same thing,—at Chatillon, at Verres, and in every small town that I visited. I have made a tour of the lower valley of Aosta, as as far as Settimo, Vittone, and went not only to the villages on the roads, but also to the small towns at both ends of the valley. I sold something at Chatillon, Verres, Chande, Pisa, Arnat, Bard, Donnaz, and Carema. At Settimo I saw Brother Libbolo, who was ill. I am to send two

large Bibles to Settimo, two others to Carem, also a large French one to Donnaz. The principal persons who bought are—in Bonino, the proprietor of a coffee-house at Verres, who bought a large Italian New Testament of 1 fr. 50 cts., and in Salsa, who bought several books. The Insinateur of Chatillon, who was present at my evening service last Sunday, afterwards wished to discuss several points. He will not admit free inquiry. After an hour's discussion, he bought a catechism and some tracts. This Sunday I had two services, and there was a better attendance in the evening; as the greater part were Piedmontese, they begged me to preach in their dialect, because they did not understand French, and I did so. The service was held in the saloon of M. Verney's inn (Hôtel du Palais Royal); every one was satisfied. But I don't seek the satisfaction of men; I seek their welfare, and the satisfaction of the Lord, and to do his will. I hear, during my absence, a good number of persons at St. Christophore, and also of Bressogne, have petitioned for a sermon every week in each of the towns. I am in consequence much encouraged to distribute God's Word in the country round about. Many come to the service at Aosta, because, happily, the gospel circulates among the people in spite of the infamous opposition of the priests, and the congregations increase. Now, I am inclined to go again to Villeneuve, St. Pierre, La Salle, and Morgez, where I hope to sell something.

"The total sale of this month only amounts to 57 frs. 15 cts. Several difficulties are in the way —the opposition of the priests, and money is scarce. Many show the greatest desire to buy, but have not the money. The type of the Bibles is very minute, so it is difficult to be read by those who have not very good sight and are not accustomed to read. I feel myself rather feeble, not having sufficient means to live and nourish myself on my travels, on account of the great expense. Thank God, my health would be good enough if I could nourish myself better; I can only make one small meal a-day, towards evening. If one wishes to sell, one must always lose something on the books, and the sale is not abundant. I hope God, in his providence, will come to my assistance, and give me my daily bread while I work in his name and for his glory. I sent my account to M. Tron and asked for the necessary books.

"With respect and gratitude, I am your humble servant,

"PIERRE DORO."

"The self-denial of the poor colporteur will excite admiration. It is right to add, however, that no blame is due for his defective supplies. His salary was regularly forwarded. Some difficulty in the communications of the district where he laboured appears to have caused his temporary embarrassment."

CHAPTER XII.

RELIGIOUS LITERATURE FOR ITALY.

A WIDE and effectual door is open to the Italian mind through the press, whose instrumentality has already proved eminently useful in conveying a knowledge of the Word of Life to some places to which the evangelist has not yet had access, while in other scenes it has proved the most effective aid of his labours. In addition to the Bible and New Testament, numerous excellent publications in the form of books, and tracts, newspapers, such as the *Buona Novella*, published in Turin, and fugitive sheets, have been widely circulated, and it is gratifying to know that the demand for such publications is rapidly increasing. Genoa has just established a periodical which is described as a combination of the *Leisure Hour* and *Sunday at Home*. It is written with much spirit, articles are well adapted to their object, and the incidents are attractive. A portion of the evangelical literature of our own country, of France, and Germany, has been translated into the beautiful language of Italy, to prevent the delay which would have occurred if none but original and native productions had been employed to supply the first wants of Italian in-

quirers after divine truth. Among the translated works which are eagerly read by Italians, are D'Aubigné's "History of the Reformation," Haldane's "Commentary on the Romans," "The Pilgrim's Progress," M'Crie's "History of the Reformation in Italy," Luther on the Galatians, Leighton on Peter, the Shorter Catechism, the "Letters of the Rev. John Newton," the "Bible Manual," by the Rev. Dr. Angus, the "Morning Watches of Dr. M'Duff," the Protestant Catechism," "Nicodemus and Elia," "The Sacred Triad," by Mr. Somerville, of Glasgow, "Follow Jesus," by the Rev. Newman Hall, the "Life of Havelock," the "Loss of the Kent," etc. One of the most popular and useful translations into Italian is the "Lucilla" of the late Adolphe Monod, which is thus characterized in the preface:—

"His design is to prove that the Holy Scriptures are inspired of God, and are consequently of divine authority; and that it is at once the privilege and duty of all people to read them with a reference to their personal salvation. The volume is, therefore, on the one hand, an antidote to infidelity, which regards the Bible as a mere human composition, and to Popery, on the other, which would restrict the reading of the sacred books. The manner in which the author has executed his task is worthy of high praise. His reasoning is beautifully simple, lucid, and strong; and his spirit kind, benevolent, serious, and firm. He speaks

with authority, for he thoroughly understands his subject; and with tender affection, for his heart yearns over those who obstinately reject the Word of God, and who are passing to their final account ignorant of the blessed truths."

The press in Florence can now be employed for the production of evangelical literature, whereby the expense of printing is greatly reduced, and the carriage from a distance is saved. This important concession has been duly improved, as large editions of valuable works are being rapidly printed and published.

During the recent visit of Gavazzi to this country, the author had the opportunity of conversing with him respecting the most efficient manner of co-operating with the Christian workers in the literary department of the good work in Italy. Without in any way depreciating our popular religious literature, and fully admitting its adaptation to our own wants, he expressed a strong opinion against the translation of English works for general distribution in Italy. Italians have their own modes of thought and expression, which differ materially from ours, and if the popular mind of Italy is to be reached, it must be by those who think as Italians think, and speak as Italians speak. It must be evident that tracts of the narrative series, whose scenes, actors, and manners, are all English, even if they are read when translated, cannot convey into the mind of

the reader the impressions they would readily produce in England. Nor can the English writer treat questions of theology and morals in such a method as to meet the wants of Italians on these great questions, and with a reasonable hope that he will be thoroughly understood, or if understood, that he would convey the truth in the most impressive manner, or attack evil in those forms it assumes in the various classes of Italian society.

The great work of Italian regeneration must, in this, as in every other department, be conducted by Italians themselves. If we could supply all the religious literature required for the use of our brethren, we should render them a disservice instead of a benefit, by discouraging that mental activity which is required in the great conflict on which they have entered; nor should we duly appreciate their intelligence and energy by constituting them the translators and distributors of English religious literature. It is most satisfactory, therefore, to find that these opinions are entertained by our Italian brethren, and those of our countrymen who have had an opportunity of forming a correct judgment on this important question.

It will not alarm the friends of truth to learn that the attempts to circulate a sound religious literature in Italy has excited no small amount of resistance on the part of the Romish priesthood. Those who know the power of divine truth, and

have perused its history, cannot doubt that it will prove victorious in all its conflicts with error: far from deprecating opposition, they challenge the encounter with the confident assurance that earnest, but candid opponents will eventually confess their defeat, and yield themselves into a willing captivity. It is possible, as the former religious reformation in Italy shows, by fire and water, by imprisonment and banishment, to destroy or silence the witnesses for Jesus; but in fair and open combat, the gospel has always triumphed, and its champions have proved "more than conquerors."

CHAPTER XIII.

EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT IN ITALY.

It may be thought contradictory to speak at one time of Italians as a people distinguished by the culture of science and the fine arts, by exquisite taste, and elegant accomplishments, and then to urge the necessity of education in a land thus favoured. This apparent inconsistency is, however, fully justified by the great inequality which is seen in the different grades of Italian society. It is true that a peculiar genius marks the whole Italian race, but it is also true that among the humbler classes its development has been repressed, except when it could be employed to minister to the aggrandizement of the Church, and the luxurious enjoyment of the rich. Perhaps no land presents in a more remarkable degree the extremes of intellectual light and darkness, or the sad alienation of mental and artistic training from moral culture. All true civilization has respect to the many as well as the few; the progress of real improvement is in favour of the multitude; and, if Italy had been blessed with the light of the gospel, with a faithful Christian ministry, with a nobility ruled by Christian principle, its millions would have held

one of the highest, if not the very highest, place among the nations. These people, so richly endowed with intellect, with taste, with artistic skill, have been allowed to remain without education or any encouragement to obtain it. The policy of Romanism in Italy, as in every land where its baleful influence is felt, has been to keep the people in ignorance, and especially in ignorance of the Word of God; and, as has been already shown, the ability of the people to read is in the inverse ratio of their proximity to the city of Rome. To evangelize Italy, it is, therefore, essential that the work of popular education should be zealously carried forward, and while the work of the teacher must be principally among the young, the hope of the Church will be directed more to the next generation than the present.

All the friends of the moral elevation of Italy are convinced of the importance of education. It will be the policy of statesmen as well as the felt duty of the Christian philanthropist, to promote this good work among all, from infancy to adult age. Count Cavour has left a large sum for the establishment of an infant school in Turin; the Government is seriously employing itself with the improvement of the Tuscan and Neapolitan schools, and King Victor Emmanuel feels the importance of education throughout his enlarged dominions.

A most remarkable illustration of the neglected education of the Italians, and of their desire to ob-

tain it, is furnished in a recent number of the official journal of Naples. An English gentleman, master of the language, and deeply interested in promoting education in Italy, is now directing his special attention to the Island of Capri. As an honorary inspector of Public Instruction, he has visited the two schools in that island and two others in Anacapri, and employed all his energies to render them effective by inducing the people to supply funds, while the Government furnishes books. This gentleman speaks truly when he says, "Ignorance is the root of the sufferings of the Italians." "I find people well disposed. They say, 'We are savages, sir," and I cannot tell you how many rewards we are promised hereafter. I do not attempt to evangelize; my object is to make people think, and all will come after." To support the self-accusation of the poor people of Capri, the writer, Mr. Wreford, asks, "Could you believe it, that in a population of from four to five thousand souls, there is not a woman who can read well or write a letter? The gross ignorance is something astonishing, and it is with instruments such as these that I have to work."

This zealous friend of Italian education is doing a great work among those he describes as the "half-savages," who are gratefully accepting his good services in their behalf. Observing the great want of schools for children of three or four years old, who could derive no benefit from the instruc-

tion given to children between eleven and thirteen years of age, Mr. Wreford determined to open an infant school at his own expense, but encouraging their people to take a share in the good work, "that," as he says, "these good citizens might learn that, with regard to the public good, it is the duty of each man to lend a hand, that he may have a right to share in the common benefit." Encouraged by the success of his first school, this gentleman has established two others. Besides these infant schools, the inspector says, "I have perhaps five or six hundred children, half-savages, under my care. They occupy much of my attention, as I do not like to do things by halves." It is very encouraging to mark the gratitude expressed by the people for whose benefit these exertions are made, and also to read in that public organ wherein they are reported the cordial approval expressed by Italians of these exertions by an Englishman. Speaking of the first infant school, the official journal of Naples says, "We feel sure that, supported by the charity of our citizens, and by the care of the excellent foreigner who has founded it, it must grow and prosper from day to day. This noble example of love to the weal of Italy, given us by a foreigner, will, we trust, be not only imitated but surpassed by the Italians of these provinces."

While readily acknowledging the importance and value of general education to the people of Italy, whether by voluntary exertion or the aid of

Government, the friends of its evangelization must feel the necessity of blending Scriptural instruction with the education imparted to all ages, whether infants or adults.

The Waldenses, the Italian churches, the Presbyterians from Scotland, the American brethren, all feel the necessity of affording the benefits of a sound Scriptural education to all who are willing to receive it. Evangelists find that to pursue their work effectively they must open evening schools, that the congregations they collect may be able to search the Scriptures.

The Waldenses steadily pursue the work of Christian education among pupils of all ages. Thus, in reference to Turin, we have reported the annual examination of the three schools belonging to the Vaudois Church in this city, took place in presence of a crowd of visitors, including the evangelical pastors and other highly respected gentlemen. The results were most satisfactory to the audience, in regard to the progress of the pupils, and once more gave proof of the teachers' experience and ability, and the zeal and devotedness with which they all discharge the arduous duties committed to them. We learn with pleasure that it is proposed next session, in addition to the free infant school, now found insufficient, to have another infant school with fees, intended for the children of the better classes, for whom such institutions are urgently required.

The exertions of the Waldenses for Scriptural education in Italy have already been noticed in detail in the fifth chapter of this volume, in which they are reported down to the month of May in the present year.

Gavazzi intends to have an infant school connected with each of his Mission stations.

The Bible schools of the Italian Christians, of which there are now three in Turin, one at Milan, and one at Genoa, occupy a prominent place among the machinery recently created for the moral regeneration of Italy. These excellent institutions are models for the whole kingdom, as shown in the reports of their efficiency given by the lady, Madame De Sanctis, to whose care, under the divine blessing, that prosperity may be ascribed. The report for 1860 of the Evangelical Christian Schools in Turin will best show the high and holy purpose of its conductors, and the remarkable success that crowns their labours:—

"It is rejoicing to our hearts to be able to tell you that these dear schools are all in a condition of vigorous efficiency: the number of pupils has greatly increased within this last year, for there are now one hundred and ninety-six children in attendance. Our three teachers have, throughout, given very great satisfaction, and have been, indeed, faithful and steady in their duty of teaching. We have watched over these dear schools for upwards of five years, and we have felt it our duty to

hold fast to our fundamental principle of making the precious Word of Truth the basis of all our instruction, for we know that 'one thing is needful,' and the others only useful; and we now can look back upon our labours with pleasure, for we see that rays of light have penetrated into the minds of many of these children, and that the Word of God has, in many instances, been received with joy. Most of these dear children regularly attend the Sunday-school; and we cannot but believe and hope that they will carry the tidings of the blessed gospel into their families, and that they will become living temples of the living God, and be numbered among those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"We must mention the very interesting fact of a young lad, of fifteen, who has attended the boys' school for two years. He is one of a very numerous family, and, unfortunately, the priests had induced his father to remove him from the school. The poor boy was afterwards placed at the seminary directed by these same priests. During the first few days they were very kind to the boy, and gradually they became less kind to him, until their conduct towards him was very cruel; for instance, they would make him kneel for three hours every day before an image of the Virgin Mary, telling him he must do penance, and offer up prayers to the Virgin, that through her intercession he might

be forgiven for having so long attended a school kept by heretics. You will rejoice to hear that the poor boy managed to get away from the seminary, and has returned to the school. He is a very promising lad, and his great wish is to become a teacher.

"We have at the school a boy and girl, who also desire to become teachers, but they require a certificate from Government, and they cannot obtain it unless they have undergone a course of studies in the Government Training College. We feel obliged to appeal to our Christian friends in Great Britain, to provide us with the means of preparing these young people for the important office to which they aspire, their parents being unable to maintain them during the time required for study. We calculate that about £12 a-year for each would suffice. Surely the time to favour the poor benighted children of Italy is come. Many demands are being made from all quarters for Bible-schools similar to those in Turin. We are so thankful to feel that the schools here prove to be also very useful to English children. We have several English girls, who have attended the school for upwards of two years. We do, indeed, sincerely trust that our Christian friends will continue to aid us in this labour of love; and may the Lord graciously dispose the hearts of those of his people, who love this dear country, to continue their contributions and prayers, and even to increase their

assistance, as the field of labour is constantly extending, and we think we could do more if our resources were less limited."

The origin and character of these invaluable schools has been thus described in a letter kindly sent to the author by a Christian lady, Mrs. R——, of W——, who is most zealous in promoting their maintenance and extension:—

"It was in the month of Septembes, 1855, that our valued friend, Alessandro Gavazzi, and Dr. De Sanctis met under this roof. They had been friends in former days, when they were both priests of the Church of Rome, but they had not met for eight years, and during that interval, their Heavenly Father had led them by different but right ways out of Papal darkness into the marvellous light of his gospel. I need scarcely add, that their meeting was a very affecting and joyful one. We felt it, indeed, a privilege of no common order, to entertain such eminent men, and to listen to their conversation concerning the evangelization of their beloved Italy. The 'Principles of Faith and Discipline,' recently sent forth by Dr. de Sanctis, were fully discussed, and on almost every point their opinions were in unison.

"We learned from their conversation that more thorough Christian education, especially for the women, was one of the great wants of Italy, second only to the direct preaching of the gospel; and, finding that a girls' school could be opened in

Turin, which Mrs. De Sanctis would superintend, and for which a well-qualified Christian mistress was then known to them, waiting for some suitable engagement, I and my daughter determined to become responsible for her salary, promising to collect for it, or in some other way to raise the requisite funds.

"Thus was the first evangelical school in Italy decided on, and we felt highly honoured at having it planned under our roof. There had previously been one or two Vaudois schools established, at which a few Italian children might possibly have attended; but the Vaudois are a French-speaking people, and not very popular amongst the Italians, who look on them as foreigners.

"Mrs. De Sanctis's school was opened in Turin, with the new year, 1856. The mistress was found admirably qualified for her important office, and she has since that time obtained a most satisfactory Government certificate, so that it would now be impossible for the school to be put down. The number of children who at first attended was *very* few. It was the day of small things, but not on that account to be despised, for it was a great thing to have any school at all in a Popish capital. Gradually, the numbers increased. Sometimes the priests threatened the parents with their maledictions, if they continued to send their children to a heretical school, and the school was in consequence thinned for a few weeks; but the children

had become attached to their teacher, the parents were delighted with their progress, and they soon quietly slipped in again.

"My daughter and I visited Turin in the autumn of that year, and we were much pleased with our visit to the school, the neatness and order that prevailed, and the wonderful progress made by the children in so short a time, in reading, writing, arithmetic, and needlework. The Biblical instruction was given by Dr. De Sanctis himself, who visited the school twice a-week. On one of these occasions we were present, and were delighted with the intelligent answers of the children, showing considerable knowledge of the Scriptures, and apparent interest in their contents. Several persons of a more advanced age stood in the doorway. These were the Roman Catholic parents, who would not attend any of Dr. D.'s other meetings, but who could not resist the pleasure of listening to the answers of their children. Large portions of the Word of God had been committed to memory, and were most correctly and intelligently repeated in their own beautiful language. On this point Mrs. D. lays great stress, for she says, 'Who can foresee the destiny of these dear children? They may be persecuted, and have their Bibles taken from them, but if the precious words are written on their memories, and, above all, if they are impressed on their hearts by the Holy Spirit, of these they can never be deprived.'

"We continued to receive very satisfactory reports of the school, and from the numbers who attended, it was at length found necessary to separate the infants from the elder children, and an additional mistress was engaged, chiefly supported by Mrs. De Sanctis's aunt, Miss Somerville, of Edinburgh, and other ladies in Scotland.

"The numbers continued to increase, and the attendance of some elder boys showed the urgent need of a master. Mrs. De Sanctis expressed her anxiety on this point, in a letter which I read to Mr. Gavazzi. The importance of such a school, under the admirable superintendence of Dr. and Mrs. D., deeply impressed him. It seemed so sad that they should be prevented engaging a valuable master, merely from want of funds. After a few minutes' consideration, Gavazzi said, 'It is decided; with the blessing of God, there *shall* be a boys' school in Turin.' And he desired me to write to Mrs. De Sanctis, to say that the master might be engaged, as he would undertake to be responsible for the payment of the salary. And from that time to this, £48 or £50 have annually been paid by that generous man, or by friends influenced by him to take an interest in this work.

"The boys' school was accordingly opened in January, 1858, and it is an interesting fact that the first evangelical school for Italian boys was commenced under the direct auspices of the two most eminent Christian reformers of modern times

—Alessandro Gavazzi and Luigi De Sanctis. The master is a superior man, thoroughly qualified for his work, and the progress of the lads under his tuition has been something remarkable.

"About three months ago, we were again in Turin. The schools have been removed to a more commodious building, in another part of the city. The number of pupils had increased to upwards of two hundred, who occupy three rooms—boys, girls, and infants—each supplied with an excellent teacher. We were delighted with the general aspect of the schools — the whitewashed walls covered with maps and pictures, most of which we recognized as the grant of the British and Foreign School Society, and the Christian Knowledge Society, sent in our Christmas-box. The utmost order and regularity prevailed. The children were very clean and tidy in their appearance, and the countenances of most of them beamed with good feeling and intelligence. They received us most affectionately as the representatives of their English friends, and the best child in each school was permitted to present us with a splendid bouquet, accompanied by a little address, expressive of kind and grateful feeling. The needlework, writing-books, etc., which we examined, were beautifully neat—creditable alike to the pupils and their instructors. It was very touching to hear their voices united in sweetly singing, in parts, several of their beautiful Italian hymns. Mrs. Rosetti

kindly instructs them in this delightful art, and the singing was of an unusually high order. They were much pleased to receive a number of texts, neatly printed on coloured cards, which had been selected and given to us for distribution in the schools by the Countess of Cavan.

"But what chiefly delighted us in these schools, was the refined, elevated tone which pervaded everything. We felt in a happy atmosphere of Christian love. The master and mistresses are true Christians, earnestly labouring, not merely to give the best secular instruction, but doing all in their power, by prayer, precept, and example, to lead the dear children committed to their care to that gracious Saviour who took young children in his arms and blessed them. They are admirably superintended by Mr. and Mrs. Rosetti, who have resided in Turin since Dr. De Sanctis's removal to Genoa. The Biblical instruction is conducted by Mr. R. It was most interesting to see the children sitting before him with their open Bibles, turning so readily and intelligently to the passages to which he directed their attention. The good seed sown in these schools is not merely springing up, but already bringing forth fruit, especially in the case of two of the elder boys, fifteen and sixteen years of age, who, it is believed, have really given their hearts to the Lord, and who, if their education is further carried on, may become most valuable schoolmasters, colporteurs, or evangelists.

But for this purpose, about £12 per annum for the support of each is requisite, as their parents are extremely poor. Will not any benevolent British Christians undertake, for a few years, to provide for these interesting youths? An intelligent girl is also anxious to qualify herself for teaching.

"I have already adverted to the removal, last December, of Dr. De Sanctis, from Turin to Genoa, to supply the place of Mazzarella, who had been appointed Professor of Mental Philosophy in the University of Bologna. Mrs. D., with her usual energy, immediately made arrangements for commencing a school, which was opened in the early part of the present year, the funds for its establishment having been chiefly collected amongst the English visitors at Mentone, by the wife of an Irish clergyman. In visiting this school, I was reminded of the one in Turin, when I saw it five years ago. The number of children was small—not more than thirty—under a very pleasing, superior mistress; but everything was full of promise, and I doubt not that, under Mrs. De Sanctis's fostering care, it will soon rival the school in Turin in the number of pupils, as well as in their advancement in knowledge.

"Whilst we were in Genoa, in May, Gavazzi passed through on his way to England. On the Sunday evening he preached, instead of De Sanctis, a most powerful gospel sermon, which completely enchained the attention of his numerous and enthusiastic hearers.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DUTY AND MEANS OF HELPING THE WORK.

THERE is, perhaps, no portion of evangelical Christendom in which the duty of co-operating in the work of God in Italy is not practically recognized. All intelligent and earnest Protestants regard Romanism as the great apostasy, and one of the principal barriers to the progress of the gospel, and as formerly they longed and prayed for its overthrow, so now are they ready, as opportunity is afforded, to labour, in order that this great result may be hastened. The consternation and distress now poured forth in the allocutions of the Pope are equalled only by the delight and gratitude produced among all who love the gospel, and observe the clear indications of the dissolution of Romish tyranny.

We shall be the better prepared to assist in this great work, if we thus form a correct idea of its vastness. This consideration will prepare our minds for the primary duty of prayer for the spiritual welfare of Italy. "Pray for Italy," says Gavazzi, "if it be but once in the month." Should we not daily remember Italy in our private and

family devotions? And should a Lord's-day pass over in which our congregations are not encouraged to send up their intercessions in behalf of the people who have acquired political freedom, that they may be emancipated from error and sin, and realize the liberty of the gospel? All our friends who are bearing the heat and burden of the day, feel the pressure of that heavy burden, and realizing their dependence on the divine blessing, invoke our aid in earnest intercession at the throne of grace. Their language is that of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, "Ye also helping together by prayer for us."

Besides the usual inducements to prayer, founded on the divinely appointed relation between the intercessions of the Church and the outpouring of the divine blessing, there are special reasons for prayer in reference to Italy. It might be enough for us to remember, that we are commanded to pray for the coming of the Saviour's kingdom, that the blessing is promised in answer to prayer, that the assurance that we are earnestly praying will greatly encourage those for whom our prayers are offered; but, added to all these considerations, we should notice the special reference in the Divine Word to the prayers and praises of the Church in connection with the destruction of Antichrist. When the Apostle John saw "at the foot of the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which

they held," he heard loud voices crying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Again, we find those that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, singing, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord. and glorify thy name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee, for thy judgments are made manifest." So again, when Babylon falls, prayer is turned into the voice of triumph, and the voice of "much people"—of the whole redeemed Church—is heard saying, "Alleluia, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, be unto the Lord our God."

Can we thus read, and fail to perceive that the period when Antichrist is overthrown will be a time of earnest prayer, and of jubilant thanksgiving throughout the Church? And as the work now beginning in Italy is the work by which, so far as human means are concerned, this blessed consummation is to be effected, we can indulge in delightful hope only as we abound in fervent prayer. Pray we then that the Lord may stand by all the faithful preachers and teachers of his Word, and give them heavenly wisdom to guide their holy zeal; that the Spirit may be poured out on all them that hear and read the Word; that suitable agents

may be raised up for the great work, and the Lord may thrust forth more labourers into his harvest; that many of the priests may become obedient to the faith, and that all who see the errors and evils of the mystical Babylon may have courage to obey the divine exhortation, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Happily efficient organizations are in existence through which aid may be imparted, with the assurance that it will be faithfully and wisely administered.

The British and Foreign Bible Society has already proved the honoured instrument of sowing the good seed of the Word to a wide extent in Italy. That noble society, at its last anniversary, reported the circulation of thirty thousand copies of the Scriptures during the year, and the employment of at least thirty colporteurs, who had traversed the land with a cheap and open Bible. 'From Messina to the French frontiers, the society has been fulfilling its mission among the Italian people, seeking to place within the reach of all classes those records of inspired truth, which are designed to confer on men the noblest and truest freedom." The efficient services of this Society to Italy, is further shown by the fact that, up to March, 1861, there had been printed for the Society's use 143,868 Italian Bibles, and 277,287 Testaments, a total of 421,155, besides 7500

portions of the Sacred Scriptures. Let us help this noble Society to do its work in Italy.

The Edinburgh Bible Society has lately directed its special attention to Italy, and last year sent out a gentleman to traverse the country, to converse with judicious friends residing there, and report as to proper places at which to form depôts for books, persons likely to prove suitable depositaries and agents to superintend the work, the editions and kinds of Bibles to be circulated, the probable expense to be incurred, and the operations of other societies. A most suitable person for this responsible mission was found in Sheriff Jameson, whose report of the scenes he visited, many of them in company with Dr. Stewart, of Leghorn, is a document of the greatest interest.

The arrangements of the Society have been made in accordance with the judicious advice of its deputation, paying particular attention to the subject of colportage.

The Foreign Aid Society has distributed a portion of its grants to the Waldensian board, having resolved to "strengthen the hands of the existing agencies by a special subscription," and all who are desirous of supporting the missionary operations of the Waldenses, will find in this well-managed and truly Christian society a channel through which their gifts will be safely conducted to their destination.

It should at the same time be understood that

the Foreign Aid Society cannot, by its constitution, make pecuniary grants to individuals, however important may be the work for the time carried on by such individuals; the deputation, therefore, recommended that any donations destined to aid the Italian work under Dr. De Sanctis at Turin (now of Genoa), and Signor Mazzarella (now of Bologna), and others at Genoa, or wherever there may be found stations for teaching the Word of God in Sardinia, be received at the office of the Foreign Aid Society, and that such donations be transmitted from time to time to the Italian committee at Geneva, to be applied in increasing the number of evangelists acting under the direction of the Italian converts.

The Evangelical Continental Society* is another excellent medium through which assistance may be conveyed to any department of Christian labour in Italy.

There are also local organizations in Geneva and Nice, to which perhaps others will be added in Florence and Leghorn, for the purpose of sustaining the Christian labourers in their work. The Genevan committee is under the presidency of the excellent Col. Tronchin, with whom there is associated a number of excellent men devoted to the spread of the gospel in Italy, as well as Switzerland. The plan of this committee is to send out men who appear in the congregations to be pos-

* 7, Blomfield Street, E.C.

sessed of competent gifts and such a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures as to enable them to read and explain simply the Word of God." It appears also that "the whole of the Italian work, as connected with the Genevan committee, is carried on by what we should designate Lay agency, the evangelists being supplied with little more than food and raiment, to which some additions are occasionally made by Christians in this country. In 1857 eleven such agents had been prepared in the congregations of Turin and Genoa. The friends in Geneva have laid down the principle that "they will not take upon themselves the responsibility of sending and directing evangelists from Geneva, but will confine their action to supporting religious movements already established, conscientiously investigating each particular case, and examining the spirit of those who take part in it."*

The Nice Foreigners' Evangelization Committee differs somewhat from that at Geneva. It will be well understood in this country by the friends of the London City Mission, on whose principles it is based. It has "a similar direct aim at the salvation of immortal souls by the knowledge of Jesus Christ, a similar catholicity of

* The committee of Geneva may be assisted from this country through Col. Tronchin or the Foreign Aid Society. Subscriptions for the Nice committee are received by Herbert Mayo, Esq., Oakhill, Hampstead, and by Messrs. Barnett, Hoare, and Co., 61, Lombard Street.

spirit, and impartiality in reference to denominational distinctions, and a similar desire to unite in one common work, members of the several bodies of evangelical Christians, for which end the committee consists of foreigners of any nation visiting Nice, and holding evangelical sentiments, whose earnest desire and aim it is to act in the most cordial harmony with the ancient church of the Vaudois, and with all churches, societies, or individuals, who are or may hereafter be labouring to promote the diffusion of scriptural truth."

It may probably interest some of those who peruse these pages, to learn that there are particular objects not at present contemplated by the societies already named, but highly deserving the attention of benevolent persons who are ready to impart aid where it is needed. Among such objects a place is due to the helpless condition of those priests who from religious conviction abandon the Church of Rome, and thus give up their only means of temporal support. As the light of the gospel spreads in Italy, there are many priests who receive that light, and are ready to follow its guidance, and endure the loss of all things for the truth's sake. There are others who would sink into helpless poverty if they obeyed their convictions and at once came out of Popery. Upwards of forty priests have sometimes been seen among the hearers of Gavazzi, most of whom remained after the service for conversation and inquiry.

Many such persons are on the point of leaving the Church of Rome. The professors of the gospel are comparatively few, and for the most part poor, and unable to receive a converted priest into their habitations, and there are, perhaps, no such hospitable asylums as were opened to the convert in the dwellings of rich and princely Protestants of the sixteenth century.

With the strongest determination to present to the Roman priesthood no mercenary inducement to profess the doctrines they have received, or to come among us before they have really gone to Christ, we ought duly to estimate the trials of the man who honestly and heartily abandons the Church from which he derives his sole support. Men who have the courage to take this important step ought not to be left to the cold charity of the world, nor should they fail to find among those whose faith they have adopted, Christian brethren by whose sympathies they may be cheered in the hour of trial. Timely aid wisely administered, by those who know the circumstances of each case, and in what mode help may be most efficiently imparted, would shield many a sincere and earnest convert among the priesthood from trials and sufferings which he ought not to pass through while those among whom he is willing to cast his lot, have the means of succour.

A correspondent, whose pen has already enriched this volume, puts in a plea for those who

are actually doing the work of God in Italy, and which it is best to present in her own words :—

"I think the position of the leading evangelists has not been properly considered in England. They are gentlemen by birth and education, who have given up all for conscience sake. It has hitherto been thought sufficient to know that they were freed from absolute want, that they could carry on their important work without danger of actual starvation (and it would be well if even this were always thoroughly ascertained). But ought not something more than a bare subsistence to be granted to them? ought they not to have sufficient to live in comfort, to be able to show hospitality to the younger evangelists and others, to relieve the poor and sick in their congregations, or to take little journeys to other stations, etc., etc., without any difficulty, and without being expected to give any account of their expenditure? Such an account may properly be required by a committee responsible to the public, and consequently compelled to disburse their funds with the strictest care and economy. But there are many wealthy private Christians, who if they could be made aware of the value of a few pounds to these noble-minded men, and who if they considered the extreme importance of freeing them as far as possible from temporal anxieties, so that they might go forward in their work of faith, unrestrained by worldly cares, would I believe feel it a privilege,

privately, to present to them liberal offerings of Christian love; and such offerings would be rendered doubly acceptable, if accompanied by a few words of encouragement and sympathy.

Those valuable schools already described and formed by Mrs. De Sanctis, have a special claim on our support that they be adequately sustained and increased. From the description already given, their value will be highly appreciated, and it may be that the appeal in their behalf, furnished by the pen which has so well described them will call forth a liberal response.

"Those who feel their hearts drawn out to aid this cause, cannot do better than send assistance to Mrs. De Sanctis, who will most judiciously make use of their contributions. She has been applied to to establish schools in Biella and other places, and is kept back solely by want of funds. If any friend would undertake to collect £35 or £40 for the salary for a mistress, a school would be at once opened, and the blessed consequences who can foresee or estimate.

"I should also feel very glad if you would mention how thankfully we should receive the smallest contributions for the box we annually send to Mrs. De Sanctis. The articles chiefly desired are calico, coloured flannel, and other materials, which are made into clothing by the girls in the school, or by the members of the little working society, to which reference is made in Mrs. De Sanctis'

reports. We are also anxious to obtain a number of little presents of various kinds for the children in the different schools, which are given either as rewards for good behaviour in learning, or are useful for the Christmas tree, which is not only a great pleasure to the children, but really helps to make the school popular."*

The question, To what extent, and in what modes we may render our personal assistance to the work of the Lord in Italy, demands very careful attention. It has been already shown that converted Italians are labouring to convey the gospel to their countrymen; and there can be but one opinion as to the evils that would result from such interposition on our part as would either take the work out of their hands or interfere with their own methods of operation, or impress it with a foreign character. There is a danger that we might unwisely interpose and check the great operations we are anxious to assist, and the dread of such an evil has, as we have already seen, called forth those strong expressions of caution we have quoted from Signor Gavazzi, and which are largely shared by other pious Italians. Still it is not the idea of that great man, or any of his coadjutors, that we should not be present in any part of the

* It is the request of Mrs. De Sanctis that contributors in England should send their subscriptions for the schools to Mrs. Rawson, Wincobank Hall, near Sheffield, who also will receive offerings for the evangelists.

field of action, nor is it their wish that in all circumstances our personal co-operation should be withheld. We shall learn from our brethren in Italy how, when, and where, our personal help may be beneficially applied, and we must be ready to afford such co-operation as will prove acceptable, where it is really needed.

Professor Revel, of the Waldensian College in Florence, thus invokes our personal exertions in the work:—"Our field of action is great and we are very few. Italy, it has often been said, should be converted by the Italians; but very few among them are actually in a condition to carry on the work. We must have experience; we must have a certain instruction; and we must have men who can give it. My colleague, and Signor Mazzarella and I, are at work in the midst of Italy; we come to ask of you some of your young people, the most pious and most devoted, for the work of evangelization. The apostles, although unlearned, quitted Palestine to evangelize the world. Such was the influence of faith. We surely have need of it. You have young persons full of faith who could be useful to us. Together we would prepare for the work. We would instruct each other, and work with more success. Their pastoral experience would be valuable to us; for the Italians, converted yesterday, cannot be capable to evangelize to-day. Send us, then, I entreat of you, men. This is my most urgent request."

On this important subject the counsels of Mr. Jameson deserve the most serious consideration. In his admirable report to the Edinburgh Bible Society, that gentleman says :—"The churches of this country ought to send some of their best and ablest young men as missionaries to Italy. They will soon acquire enough of the language to exert an influence over the natives. Their scriptural training; their reverence for the Lord's day, so loosely regarded among all parties on the Continent, even including Christians; their stricter views of moral obligation; their very notions of civil liberty would be most valuable in the present crises. Medical missionaries, in some districts, would be most valuable auxiliaries."

The judicious operations of the Genevan and Nice committees show how English residents and visitors may encourage and help those who are doing the Lord's work in Italy; and it will not be forgotten that pious ladies from this country and America have been among the first to assist, if not to initiate this most important of our times.

A little volume, entitled "Italian Navvies on the West Swiss Railway, Canton de Vaud,"* just issued, shows how a lady from a distant land may place the Word of God in the hands of the Italians, and how the Lord will render that Word effectual to their own conversion, and the means of imparting spiritual life to many others. This most encou-

* Wertheim and Mackintosh.

raging narrative reminds us of Miss Marsh's "English Hearts and English Hands," showing the all-conquering power of divine truth over the hearts of Italians.

We may tender our personal co-operation in this great and good work among the Italians, even without leaving our own shores. Mr. Jameson informs us that at the town of Savona it was discovered that a family circle had received the truth, and on inquiry being made as to the means, it was found that one or two of them, when on a voyage, had received a copy of an Italian Bible at an English seaport, which they had studied when they returned home, and then made known its blessed message of mercy to their friends and neighbours. Well may it be said that "a single fact like this is worth volumes of reasoning." It reminds us that Italy is brought near to our doors, and should stimulate our zeal and activity in distributing the Word of God among those who are thus placed within our reach. Relying on the divine promise, may we not hand a New Testament or pious Italian tract to poor wanderers in our streets, and to the artists and professional persons who are seeking the means of support among us? And may we not hope that it shall yield not only "bread to the eater," but "seed to the sower," giving to the exile the bread of life, and affording him, on his return to Italy, the means of sowing the incorruptible seed of heavenly truth among his countrymen?

CONCLUSION.

WHILE carefully resisting all temptation to overestimate the great work of Italian regeneration, which is now only in its commencement, we may feel satisfied that it has really begun, and will steadily advance until it reaches a blessed consummation. The land which has for such long ages been darkened by Romish error is now emerging into the light of divine truth, and we may confidently anticipate the day when in every part of Italy—to which the "Eternal City" shall be no exception—it shall be said, "The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth."

That gorgeous hierarchy which, in its proud and palmy days, has furnished the strongest contrast to the meek and lowly spirit of Him whose sacred name it assumes, and whose saints it has persecuted unto death, is no longer the proud and insolent ruler over kingdoms and their monarchs, but an humble suppliant for kingly favour, and dependent on that favour for its existence. Shorn of his territory, that patrimony of St. Peter deemed essential to his due maintenance, the Pope has to submit to the degradation of soliciting the alms of

the faithful, given with too sparing a hand for the great needs of the sovereign pontiff and the cardinals who form his court. The work of the Italian evangelist is not to fight against this hierarchy, or overturn the colossal structure in which its magnificence is displayed. That work is assigned, in the divine providence, to statesmen and monarchs, to wise politicians and heroic generals, who are fulfilling their mission with a hearty goodwill, so that we seem to have reached the dawn of that "one day" when her "plagues" shall come, "death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

The Church of the living God may indeed contemplate with profound awe the work of righteous retribution in which He is now, by appropriate instrumentality, fulfilling the predictions of his infallible Word. This contemplation of the wonders of divine providence will stimulate the holy zeal of believers to greater activity and perseverence. The sower will go forth to sow, and in Italy, as in other lands, "they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The eager purchasers who buy the sacred treasure, because it is the favourite book of the English, and the great aid to political freedom, will learn the truth of the Saviour's words, "If the Son make

you free, you shall be free indeed," and find their welcome into that "kingdom which shall never be moved," which "is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Faithful evangelists will be multiplied as the number of converts increase, and will leave no district without reason to say, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." That deep sense of obligation to labour for the extension of the Saviour's kingdom, as well as to pray that it may come, which distinguishes all Italian converts, will render every little company of true Christians a missionary society for the town or country in which it is placed, and entitle it to the commendation given by the Apostle Paul to the Church in Thessalonica, "From you sounded out the word of the Lord." And sound it will from Turin throughout Piedmont, from Milan over all the rich plains of Lombardy. The railway conveyance which now connects Turin, Genoa, Milan, and Bologna, and is to unite Central and Southern Italy with the North, will greatly assist the Christian orators whom God is raising up to preach in these places, and to "them that be in Rome also," that grand system of doctrine and duty first addressed to Romans. So shall the heavenly message spread abroad until—

> "The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
> Shout to each other, and the mountain tops

From distant mountains catch the flying joy;
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous Hosanna round."

The last couplet in these favourite lines of Cowper suggest the encouraging thought that a regenerated Italy will yet co-operate in the great work of bringing other lands to the knowledge of Christ. The influence of Rome, when released from the tyranny of error and superstition, will tell powerfully on distant nations. Now it is employed to bind the heathen in the chains of superstition; hereafter, it will be used for the truth of the gospel. It is only a few weeks since the ambassadors from Japan paid their homage at the footstool of the Pope, and proffered the gratitude of their sovereign for Romish priests sent to instruct their countrymen. The day will come when the only missionaries from Italy will go forth to unbind the heavy burden, to take off the galling yoke imposed in the times of ignorance, and to ask distant nations to share in the liberty of the gospel.

The day is coming when Rome shall see the anxious inquirers after gospel light, not as now reading the Scriptures by stealth in little companies from which spies and intruders are carefully excluded, but thronging to those splendid churches where now prayers are directed to the Virgin and saints, and the preachers substitute the dogmas of men for the truth of God. Then, beneath the dome of St. Peter's, shall crowds assemble, as we have seen

beneath the dome of St. Paul's, eager listeners to the faithful preaching of the everlasting gospel.

It is delightful to anticipate the blessed results that will be obtained when Italy is thoroughly pervaded with the light of evangelical truth. There are vast treasures of intellectual wealth in the Italian mind, which, if no longer perverted by error, would materially assist to build up the tabernacle of the Lord. The linguistical skill, the poetic taste, the refinement produced by the culture of the arts, the love of music, by which Italians are distinguished, may all be employed as aids to the development of the highest truths, and the promotion of the divine glory. Hitherto the corrupt Church of Rome has not only withheld these things from the service of Jesus, but rendered them tributary to anti-Christian error. Painters, sculptors, singers, have all aided to realize the ideas of the priesthood, whose learning, limited to a very few, had rendered little help in the great conflict of the Christian Church with infidelity and heathenism. Let the heart of Italy be given to Christ and his truth, and among the worshippers who enter his temple there will be none whose aspect is more beautiful, or who will place on his altar a richer offering.

Anticipating this glorious transition from error to truth, we have not to regard such scenes as placed far beyond the reach of our vision, or to say, in the words of Balaam, when he had described the